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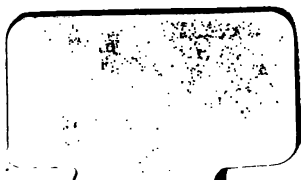
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Tracts for Englishmen.

THE
SEARCHING OF THE HEART.

BY THE
REV. E. B. PUSEY, D.D.
OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.



11.

LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.
1844.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]



members of his kingdom here, to fit us for his presence in the kingdom of glory. Had he no sins to repent of? Had he, indeed, kept the whole law? If his outward actions had been thus correct, had his thoughts been always pure? In the long retrospect of the past, was there nothing done which ought to have been undone? nothing undone which God commanded to be done? Did he dread no secret or unobserved sins, which man forgets as soon as committed, but which are written in God's book? Of all this there is nothing. Or had he no spiritual enemies to fear? Were there no temptations to which he felt liable? Was there no assistance of God which he needed? no further progress which he desired? Again there was nothing, nothing! nought but the cold confession, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." He stands a guilty creature before his Judge, and boasts his innocence: he stands sick and diseased before his Physician, and boasts his health: he stands before a merciful Father, ready to forgive, and will not ask forgiveness! The self-righteous cannot repent as sinful man ought: he cannot embrace God's mercy as he ought: he cannot love him as redeemed man should endeavour to love him: cannot pray for future aid; cannot really wish for advances in holiness. Repentance, the means of pardon, love of God, spiritual assistance in weakness, are all at once cut off from him: and in whatever degree any of us approach to his character, as long as we remain so, they are cut off from us.

"I thank thee that I am not as other men are." Now, what should have been his feelings, and what should be ours, when we hear or read—as in this sinful world we must—of the grievous sins of

others? The first is that of sorrow; that one for whom Christ died, a member of the body of Christ, should thus have fallen. "If one member suffers," says St. Paul, "all the members suffer with it,"—(1 Cor. xii. 26): "for we," he says again, "being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—(Rom. xii. 5.) Were it our friend, or our brother, or sister, or son, should we thank God that we were not as they? Should we not rather, while we prayed for them, humble ourselves before God? Should we not feel ashamed that one of our family had thus sinned? Should we blazon it abroad, or talk of it to others, or exult over him? Before God we are all brethren—brethren by creation, brethren much more by redemption: we all form one family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed: and as we should mourn and feel shame ourselves for one of our family who went astray, so ought we also for one of the great family, for whom Christ shed his blood.

One of the most pious, and the greatest of the ancient Christians, said, that 'the sins of others always made him the more humble, because he found in himself a disposition to the like things.' We have cause of shame, indeed, if we look into our own hearts, and search whether there be not in us any thing of the same evil disposition, which in our brother broke out into sin. "Thou art inexcusable, O man," says St. Paul, "whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself."—(Rom. ii. 1.) Thou, then, who judgest another, judgest thou not thyself? Thou dost not, as the heathen, take other gods beside the Lord: well—but can you say that you "love the Lord thy God with all thy

heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”—(Mark xii. 30.) Thou dost not worship a graven image: but do you set up no idol in your heart? Is there nothing which you love more than God, or which turns away your affections from God?—You swear not—you are not perjured: but have you always spoken the truth from your heart? Have you always spoken and thought of God with reverence? Has his name never been on your lips, while your heart was far from him?—You profane not the Lord’s day: but has each Lord’s day found you advancing the work of your salvation?—Have you always honoured your father and your mother? You have not openly despised your father, nor set light by your mother: but have you “obeyed them in all things? for this is,” says the apostle, “well-pleasing unto the Lord.”—(Col. iii. 20.) Did you always listen to their instructions, and not forsake their advice? Have you in little, as well as in great things, in your thoughts, as in your words, felt respect unto them? Have you honoured those who are as your father and your mother, the hoary head: and in your youth revered the face of the old man?—You have not committed murder;—few, blessed be God, do so:—but have you always remembered that “whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.”—(1 John iii. 15.) Have you never borne malice;—never let the sun go down on your wrath;—never borne ill-will?—Have you freely forgiven your brother, as fully as you pray God to forgive you your trespasses—forgiven him, if need be, seventy times seven? and are you as ready to do him good as though he had never offended you?—You have not committed adultery: but have your thoughts, as well as your actions, been always pure? Have

you never committed adultery in your heart?—You have not stolen: but have you never defrauded—never coveted?—You have not borne false witness:—would to God more could say this!—but have you never spread an evil report of your neighbours, of the truth of which you were not certain?—If you have not been free from all these things, and yet judgest your brother harshly, then, while you condemn the self-righteous or the Pharisee, “thou art thyself the man!” If you are conscious that you are also a sinner, then thank not God that you are not as the poor publican; but humble yourself before him for your own sins: and if you have not committed his, or any like his, thank God for having hitherto preserved you, and pray that you also be not tempted. “He that is without sin among you,” says our blessed Saviour, “let him first cast a stone.”—(John viii. 7.) “Brethren,” says St. Paul, “if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual,”—ye which are really endeavouring to live after the Spirit,—“restore such an one in the Spirit of meekness: considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself: but let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”—(Gal. vi. 1, 3, 4.) That is, let every man try his own conduct by the law of God, and by constant watchfulness conform himself to it, and then he shall have cause for joy in his own improvement, not that he is better than another.

One quality was wanting in the Pharisee—humility: one quality alone weighed down all the rest, and made them worthless—spiritual pride. The error of the self-righteous is one natural to

the human heart; and therefore the more dangerous. It is the more dangerous, because the persons most exposed to it do lead outwardly what are called good lives; and may, therefore, the more easily deceive themselves, that their heart is right with God—that they are “not as other men are.” Whoever is in any degree like the Pharisee, cannot really love God; neither can he repent truly of his sins, and so find acceptance with him. He cannot, as long as he is in this company, take the first step towards the kingdom of heaven. Be it that he is less guilty than others; yet, if he feels his guilt at all, he could not talk thus proudly. Shall he, for whom the holy, the spotless Jesus, was exposed to shame, and torture, and anguish of mind—shall he look up proudly to that heaven, which, to atone for his sins, his Saviour left, and say, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are?” He who knows the number of the sins which have taken hold upon him, takes a very different posture; for “he is not able to look up: he knows that they are more in number than the hairs of his head: his heart hath failed him.”—(Psalm xl. 12.)

It is by the light which the doctrine of the cross throws over all the rest of God’s dealings with us, that we see clearly how much every thing else is a ground for love: it shows us, that we, as sinners, as enemies to God, deserved nothing but punishment: it shows us, therefore, that every mercy, every blessing, which we receive, is not only not deserved, but the contrary of our deservings: it teaches us to be deeply thankful for all our daily blessings, because we deserve them not: for crosses, because they instruct us in our dependence upon God for what he takes away, as well as for that which he

gives us, that we may the more turn our affections to him: for honour, because it is his gift alone, and we deserve only shame: for dishonour, because it turns our minds the more to our own natural wretchedness, and may check us in a course displeasing to him.

To the proud all is changed: he cannot love God as he ought, for his redemption, because he feels not the extremity of misery from which he has been redeemed: he may thank him that "he is not as other men are:" but he thanks him not, that he is no longer the grievous sinner which he once was;—he thanks him not, that he is not what, but for God's grace, he would have been. Pride diminishes in his eyes the greatness of his debt to God. He has been forgiven; but for what? His sins have become to him mere frailties of the weak nature which has been given him: most are forgotten, none dwelt upon,—for could he then be proud? The good qualities which he thinks that he has, so occupy his thoughts, that his sins fade from his sight. No proud man can understand the value of his redemption.

And where the blessings of redemption are not duly valued, still less will the daily blessings of life be so: the idea of merit corrupts every thing. 'God has blessed him, it is true,' such an one will think, 'but he has blessed others more.' God has blessed his substance; but he himself has taken pains and laboured hard; and the blessing he thinks the natural consequence and the reward: he has blessed him in his domestic affections, in his wife and his children; but he himself has been careful, he will think, to retain these blessings. God has blessed him with health; but he himself has been careful, he will think, by temperance, to retain it. Much less can he bless God for his

fatherly chastisements; for he knows not that he needs them—he understands not the purposes for which they are sent.

Nay, further, he cannot really love God, for what he seems to prize—his own supposed exemption from the sins of which others have been guilty. This, too, he must think his own doing, or he could not be proud. “Shall he who has received,” argues the apostle, “glory as if he had not received?”—(1 Cor. iv. 7.) Can he who knows that he is in himself nothing—nay, worse than nothing—pride himself that God has given him every thing? Shall the debtor be proud of the greatness of his debt? Shall he who knows that he is by nature “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,”—(Rev. iii. 17.)—that he has plunged himself into yet deeper wretchedness—that he has increased his own poverty—that he has yet more blinded his own eyes—that in him there is no good thing,—shall he boast himself, that by the grace of God he is what he is? Yet the Pharisee thanks God: it is well to thank; but for what? His thanksgiving is not, “God, I thank thee, that whereas I was poor, thou hast made me rich; blind, and thou madest me to see thy will; naked, and thou hast clothed me.” It is not, “I thank thee that thou hast made me thus and thus; but I thank thee that *I am not* as other men, or rather, as the rest of mankind are.” He praises God; but it is only a thin veil, a poor excuse, to praise himself.

O may our heavenly Father, who, while “he resisteth the proud, giveth grace unto the humble,”—(James iv. 6); “who inhabiteth eternity,” but also “dwelleth with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit,”—(Isaiah xlvii. 15); may he give us grace, “not to judge, that we be *not judged*—not to condemn, that we be not con-

demned,"—(Luke vi. 37); but, SEARCHING OUR OWN HEARTS, and calling our own sins to remembrance, to turn to him, that in that day, when the thoughts of all hearts are manifested, we may have "praise of God."—(1 Cor. iv. 5.)

FREQUENT COMMUNION.

This implies a life so different from our ordinary tenour,—a life so above this world, as knit with him who hath overcome the world—so angelic, as living on him who is angel's food—an union with God so close,—that we cannot mostly, I suppose, imagine to ourselves how we could daily thus be in heaven,—and in our daily business here below, how sanctify our daily duties, thoughts, refreshment, so that they should be tinged with the hues reflected by our daily heaven, not that heavenly gift be dimmed with our earthliness,—how our souls should through the day shine with the glory of that ineffable Presence to which we had approached, not we approach to it with earth-dimmed souls. It must ever be so: we cannot know the gift of God, if we forfeit it: we must cease mostly even to long for what we forego.

Sound restoration must be the gift of God, to be sought of him in humiliation, in prayer, in mutual forbearance and charity, with increased strictness of life and more diligent use of what we have. We must consult one for the other. There is, in our fallen state, a reverent abstaining from more frequent communion, founded on real, though undue, fears: there is, and ought to be, a real consciousness that more frequent communion should involve a change of life—more collectedness in God—more retirement, at times, from society—deeper con-

sciousness of his providence—more sacredness in our ordinary actions, whom he so vouchsafes to hallow—greater love for his Passion which we celebrate—and carrying it about, in strictness of self-rule, and self-discipline, and self-denying love. Let us each suspect ourselves, not others; the backward their own backwardness—the forward their own eagerness: each habitually interpret well the other's actions and motives: they who seek to partake more often of the heavenly food, honour the reverence and humility which abstains—and they who think it reverent to abstain, censure not as innovation the return to ancient devotion and love: restore it, if we may, at such an hour of the day, when to be absent need not cause pain or perplexity, and may make least distinction: so, while we each think all good of the other, may we all together, strengthened by the Same Bread, washed by the Same Blood, be led, in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace and holiness of life, to that ineffable Feast, where not, as now, in mysteries, but face to face, we shall ever see God, and be ever filled with his Goodness and his Love.

Lastly, our One Lord is to us, all, yea more than all, his disciples dare ask or think. All are his Life, flowing through all his members; and in all, as it is admitted, effacing death, enlarging life. As blind, he is our Wisdom: as sinful, our Righteousness: as hallowed, our Sanctification: as recovered from Satan, our Redemption: as sick, our Physician: as weak, our Strength: as unclean, our Fountain: as darkness, our Light: as daily fainting, our daily Bread: as dying, Life Eternal: as asleep in him, our Resurrection.

Tracts for Englishmen.

OUR LORD'S AGONY.

BY THE

REV. W. F. HOOK, D.D.

VICAR OF LEEDS.



(2)

LONDON:

EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.

1844.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]



Our Lord's Agony.

LUKE xxii. 44.

“His sweat was as it were great drops of blood.”

It was with far other feelings than those with which he had been accustomed to retire to the wilderness, the mountain, or the garden, that the lowly Jesus, upon the eventful night, entered the enclosure of Gethsemane.

Wearied in body and worn in mind, it was rest that he required: but he foreknew that on this earth no rest awaited him. Having now entered his accustomed haunts, he said to eight of his disciples, “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.”—(Matt. xxvi. 36.) But knowing, at the same time, that his human nature was about to be sorely tried, and supernaturally oppressed, he wished, with the common feelings of that nature, to have beside him some, who, if they could not alleviate his pangs, at least might sympathize with his sufferings. It was, as man, that he was afflicted: it was, as man too, that he felt. He took with him, therefore, Peter and James and John.—(Mark xiv. 33.)

The reason of this selection is plain. Had he taken with him the other disciples, the temptation might have been greater than they would have been able to bear. Their faith might have received too severe a shock on beholding the excruciating agonies of one, whom, if they believed him to be the Messiah, they must have regarded as an

emanation from the Deity. But Peter and the sons of Zebedee had been eye-witnesses of the transfiguration on the Mount. However perplexed, therefore, they might be, they would not be reduced to despair. They had, at least, wherewithal to satisfy their minds upon this point, since they had heard the Father himself proclaim their Master to be his only begotten Son.—(Matt. xvii. 1; Mark ix. 2; Luke ix. 28.) Thus, then, as they had witnessed the glory of the Son of Man, they were the better qualified to behold the humiliation of the Son of Man.

And when he was at the place, he began to be sorrowful,—(Luke xxii. 40; Matt. xxvi. 27); to feel an unwonted depression of spirit. According to prophecy, “His soul was cast down and disquieted within him.”—(Psalm xlii. 3.) His depression increased. He began to be “sore amazed, and to be very heavy,”—(Mark xiv. 33); to be utterly exhausted, and faint with grief. According to prophecy, “He was not only compassed with the sorrows of death, but the pains of hell gat hold upon him.”—(Psalm cxvi. 3.) Under these circumstances, how touching, how sublime, how dignified, the only expressions which escaped his spirit, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!”—(Matt. xxvi. 38.)

And now, turning to his disciples, he said, Tarry ye here.” O how the heart of *any* friend would have melted within him, at such a request, after such a declaration. “Tarry ye here,” he exclaimed, “and watch with me.” At the same time he added, “And pray that ye enter not into temptation.”—(Matt. xxvi. 38; Luke xxii. 40.) Never, thou Blessed One,—never did thy tender mercy, thy loving-kindness, thy consideration for others,

forsake thee! The hour of their temptation was fast approaching: and had they been prepared against the craft and subtilty of the tempter, by watchfulness, precaution, and prayers, how different might have been the event!

He went forward. He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast. He kneeled down. The agony became more intense. He could not support himself. He fell prostrate: he fell on his face: he fell to the ground. It became almost too much for human nature to bear. He exclaimed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. All things are possible unto thee: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."—(Luke xxii. 41, 42; Matt. xxvi. 39; Mark xiv. 35.) 'This only affliction I would be saved: for the rest I am prepared: but *this* cup, if thou be willing, *this* cup I pray thee to remove; "nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done!"

How great was this agony, we may, in some degree, conceive: since his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground, if blood did not actually ooze from the pores of his flesh.

After the lapse of some time, our Lord rose up from prayer, supported, strengthened, and consoled.—(Matt. xxvi. 46.) There had appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. Then cometh he to his disciples: to those chosen friends, by conversing with whom, he may now have wished to alleviate the pangs, and dispel the horrors, by which he was oppressed. But he findeth them sleeping.—(Luke xxii. 45.) At the same time, we ought to observe, that the Evangelist, who never conceals the faults, nor palliates the errors of the apostles, expressly adds, that they were "sleeping for sorrow." And it can be scarcely necessary to

remark, that drowsiness is the natural and merciful effect of extreme grief. Let us, then, while warned by their example to watch as well as to pray, rather sympathize with their weakness, than judge of their conduct with undue severity. Consider all that they had just undergone. It was now late in the night—and the whole evening had been to them one of unceasing excitement, of much mental exertion, and of extreme agitation. They had been partakers in a rite, the full purpose of which they were, as yet, unable to understand: and they had listened to discourses, the meaning of which they could only partially comprehend. Their minds were bewildered by the events that had already taken place: and to the future they looked forward with mingled sensations of apprehension, hope, and doubt. Even now they beheld their Master suffering in a manner which could not fail to awaken their sympathy and compassion; but which seemed to contradict all the prophecies on which they had been accustomed to dwell with rapture, and by which they had been induced to expect the Messiah. It was, then, no wonder, that, while their minds were perplexed by such conflicting sentiments, they suffered sleep to surprise their wearied bodies. Consequently, the rebuke of our Lord, though marked, was gentle. “Why sleep ye?” said he. Then turning to Simon Peter, he asked, in a tone that must have struck to his heart, “Simon, sleepest thou? Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch ye, rise and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: for,”—and how deeply affecting the remark from our Lord in his extremest humiliation,—“the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”—(Matt. xxvi. 40, 41; Luke xxii. 45, 46; Mark xiv. 37, 38.)

He went away a second time; and his agony

seems to have returned in all its bitterness,—for he prayed a second time, using almost the same words: “O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”—(Matt. xxvi. 42.) “And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.”—(Mark xiv. 40.) So “he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.”—(Matt. xxvi. 44.)

All this is related in a short space: but it was no short space of time, during which the tremendous reality of this mental anguish was endured by our Redeemer. Such sufferings would have overwhelmed an impostor, and driven an enthusiast to the verge of insanity. But the conduct of the Lord Jesus was such as to confirm our faith, to excite our warmest sympathy, and to command our surprise, our amazement, our admiration. He felt as we might expect the most meek, gentle, and sensitive of mankind to feel; and yet he bore the worst with a degree of resignation, fortitude, and unassuming, unpretending patience, such as no one could have evinced, save the only Being of our species, who was sinless and perfect.

At length the cup was drunk to the very dregs; and our blessed Saviour returned to other scenes of trial. “He cometh to his disciples a third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest:”—as far as I am concerned, your watching can be no longer required—“it is enough”—I will urge you no more: “the hour is come, behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”—(Mark xiv. 41; Matt. xxvi. 45.) He is calm, *he is collected*: he knows that the hour, the very *moment*, to which he has been so long looking

forward, has arrived: he knows that he has already been betrayed: he knows that his enemies are on their way to apprehend him: while he is yet speaking, he hears the step of the Roman cohort approaching, and exclaims, "Rise up, let us go: lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

Such is the narrative of our Lord's agony. I have given it in the language of the Evangelists. I have merely endeavoured to harmonize, without attempting—(the attempt would be profane)—to adorn, those short and simple annals, of which, the affectionate nature is as irresistible, as it is inartificial.

As we retire from the contemplation of our Redeemer's agony in the garden, the words which the Church, as a sympathizing mother, addresses to her afflicted children, strikes upon the heart with redoubled force. Though no chastening," as the apostle says, "for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous:" yet, "it afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—(Heb. xii. 11.) 'We should,' says the Church, 'patiently, and with thanksgiving, bear our heavenly Father's correction, whensoever, by any manner of adversity, it shall please his gracious goodness to visit us. And there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses: for he himself went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain: he entered not into his glory, before he was crucified. So, truly, our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ; and our *door to enter* into eternal life, is *gladly to die with Christ; that we may rise again from death, and dwell with him in everlasting life.*'

And blessed the invitation to the commemoration of our Lord's death, conveyed to all who look to Christ as their Saviour, and are sincere in their desire to obtain the sanctification of his Holy Spirit. Yes; to thee, thou poor penitent, who scarcely darest to look up to heaven, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner,"—to you, the tidings we are commissioned to preach, are glad tidings of great joy. We are commissioned and commanded to tell you, that the Lord our God is gracious, merciful, and long-suffering: and that "He will not turn away his face from thee, if thou returnest unto him. Let the wicked man forsake his way: and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon." With contrition of heart, with humility of mind, and with lively faith, approach, then, the holy table, and there will be joy in heaven, when the angels witness thy repentance and record thy pardon.—Yes, ye invisible, but sympathizing ministers of omnipotent mercy, I can imagine you winging your noiseless way around the Christian altar: I can almost hear you joining in our eucharistic hymn, at that glad moment, when the contrite offender is added to the number of the faithful; and when, his sins having been done away by the blood of Christ, he goes forth, in the strength of the Lord, to commence a new career of godliness upon earth, and to lead the remainder of his life in the fear, and to the glory, of Almighty God.

With like urgency the invitation is extended to all who are overclouded by despondency, or driven to *despair*, through the vain imagination, that, *though the grace of God has been shed forth*

abundantly, yet on their hearts it will never light. To dispel these vain fears—to comfort the weary and heavy laden, by assuring them of their being in favour, because in covenant, with their Maker,—these are among the blessed reasons why this ordinance was appointed by the Divine Source of light, and life, and joy. The sacraments are not only the means of conveying grace; but they are also pledges to the sincere, that grace has actually been conferred.

Beloved brethren, who are in the constant habit of commemorating your Redeemer's death, then, in joint communion with saints above, and with the faithful upon earth, you partake happily of the heavenly banquet. Standing in the more immediate presence of that incomprehensible Being, who permits us to regard him as our friend, while we worship him as our God, you will be fed by his Word, cheered by his promises, and sustained by his Spirit: yea, the Holy Ghost himself will minister to your wants, and pour comfort into your hearts; while he cleanses your souls from iniquity, and effaces all the stainings of sin.

Jesus, then, is *the way, the truth, and the life*:—*the way*; since by him, and through him, alone, the fallen sons of Adam can approach their God as a reconciled Father: *the truth*; since he only hath the words of eternal life; and since, from him alone, speaking in his Scriptures, an answer can be obtained to the all-important question, *What must I do to be saved?* And he is *the life*; since it is only as members of his mystical body,—as branches of the true vine,—that we can obtain the grapes of that Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in Christ *without measure*; and who still abides in the Church, to inform the conscience, and enlighten

the intellect; to regulate our actions, and invigorate our virtues; to soften the heart, to sanctify the affections, and to expand the soul.

Yes; Christ is our all in all: Christ, saving us from the penalty of sin by his sacrifice of himself: Christ, saving us from the dominion of sin by the purifying influences of his Spirit. Nor is this all; for, being found in fashion as a man, he has left us an example that we should follow his steps. Who can delineate the leading features in the heavenly character of Immanuel? It is an awful task beyond the power of man. It is the never-ending employment, comfort, and delight of the true Christian, to contemplate the benign perfections of his Redeemer; until, having imbibed a portion of his Spirit, he becomes enamoured of those virtues which once shone forth in Sion, and which now supply the place of Sun and Moon in the new Jerusalem. But ere he has searched out all the excellencies of his Lord, and ascertained all the beauty of his holiness, this world and the fashion of it will have passed away: and he will find himself with the blessed St. John, reclining on his Master's bosom in the heavenly mansions of everlasting bliss. Let me only, therefore, beg you to remark that the conduct of our great Example was the very reverse of that which too generally attracts the admiration of men; and that the peculiar qualities exhibited by Him were such as the world is apt to depreciate and despise. Among the sons of men, it has ever been the custom to magnify bodily strength or mental vigour, to the depreciation of those silent and unostentatious virtues which expand the affections and elevate the soul. But in the character of our Lord, the humility of his deportment was equally striking with the calm dignity of his de-

meanour. And the fervour of his piety—his majestic, eloquent, and practical holiness—are more conspicuously brought forward by the Evangelist, than even the sagacity of understanding and Divine wisdom, which spoke in every action he performed, and in every word which he uttered. Meek as he was heroic, in him the lion and the lamb dwelt together. Indignant when his Father's honour was profaned, or his temple defiled—he feared not to expose, rebuke, and condemn the hypocritical Pharisee and the powerful Scribe; yet, merciful when he was himself injured, insulted, and reviled—he breathed out his soul in a prayer for his persecutors. Where, then, shall we find a resolution so unwearied—a fortitude so invincible—a courage so enlightened?

Redeemed by his blood, instructed by his precepts, encouraged by his example, and quickened by his Spirit, may we all diligently labour to walk in the spiritual laws which he has set before us, and to dedicate to his service all our faculties and all our powers—our reason and affections—our souls and bodies—our time and substance: thus exhibiting, in our persons, a genuine picture of true Christianity; sincere, without bigotry—and serious, without superstition. Let us recollect the agony of our Lord was real as it was tremendous,—let his bearing be our support under all the trials of pain, poverty, and grief,—let us claim his promise of the Comforter—wrestle with him, like another Israel, until, by the sanctifying operations of the everlasting Spirit, we have become one with Christ, and Christ hath become one with us;—then the Spirit of Christ will speak in our souls, and meekly say, *“Father, not my will, but thine be done.”*

Tracts for Englishmen.

SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL
EXCELLENCE.

BY THE

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LATE FELLOW OF WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD.



13.

LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.

1844.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]



Social and Spiritual Excellence.

ROMANS xii. 11.

“Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit.”

THE point at present to be enforced is this—‘that if we truly take the Scriptures for our guide and rule of life, we must endeavour to unite a social with a spiritual excellence: we must be not only creditable, but religious also.’ If we are wise, we shall indeed take care to keep a conscience void of offence towards our fellow men ; but much more shall we feel it to be necessary all the while to seek and to preserve a higher witness—the testimony of our conscience also, that, in the strength of the Divine Spirit, we have walked faithfully and humbly with our God. Yet, is this desirable union of religious character and practice combined with a decent worldly credit—this union of piety with daily duty—is this what we may behold commonly prevailing ? I grieve to think that it is not. Around how many hearts—and that in every rank of life—where every thing that wins the praise of men appears to flourish—amongst how many whom we cannot but choose to value and respect, as neighbours, for their courtesy, their friendliness, or cheerfulness, or industry, or general integrity, and qualities of that sort,—amongst how many such as these the pure flame of piety is yet wanting ! How little is the first and

great commandment really thought of! I mean the true and proper love of God, leavening the heart, as the great ruling principle of life, and the foundation for the discharge of *every* duty, whether towards God, or towards man. How little do such persons often seem to think, or care, about the things which *peculiarly* are God's—the days of rest which bear his name, given us for holy and spiritual ends, and not entirely for our own pleasure—his worship—his house—his sacraments! How much less still do they consider about the image of a *restored nature*, presented to us as a constant pattern in the person of God's own Son, or of any of the more peculiar motives, and advantages, and obligations of the Gospel! Much as there is to like, or to respect, in very many such instances, the minister of Jesus Christ can scarcely look on them without uneasiness, and fear for things to come; lest in the day of trial they should fail, and be found wanting in the point which is alone of final consequence—the approbation of their Judge, according to “the word which he hath spoken.”

In speaking thus, it is not meant to take into account extreme cases, as of all those unhappy multitudes of men of whom it may be said too surely, that, though partakers in the letter of the Christian covenant, they are among the “enemies of the cross of Christ,” being “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;” still less of open unbelievers and of scorners, who do not scruple to avow a disregard of heavenly truths, and hopes, and promises. Our present thought is of a widely different sort of men from these: it looks to instances in which the man of worldly diligence is really respectable, and worthy of the praises of his brethren as a member of society; but where the fire from *heaven*

(if it may be permitted so to speak) appears not to have descended upon the altar of the *heart*. It is the want of spiritual conviction—of salt within themselves—in such persons, that constitutes the evil now in view: an evil which, it may be feared, forms one of the most ruinous defects and blemishes in Christian communities; a sight, than which few give more lively pain to the reflecting and sincere believer, or more advantage to the adversaries or corrupters of the truth as it is found in Jesus Christ. For what is likely to be found the end of all such things? what is it which eventually suffers from them? It is the *truth itself* that suffers: it is the Gospel that at last is evil spoken of. Now, if the Gospel be our highest and chiefest good, our only solid rock of hope and comfort,—if truth be there, and *there alone*,—ought these things thus to be, among a brotherhood professing to believe the Gospel; who have been made partakers of its precious promises? Or ought we not to be, according to our several stations, at once industrious and religious; diligent and pious; “not slothful in business,” but yet “fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” alike in every way; “glorifying God both with our bodies and our spirits, which are his.”

I am aware that there is an error also on the other side; and as we love the truth, and would desire to recommend it most effectually, to let our light shine most attractively, that others may be led by it to glorify our Father which is in heaven, it is of consequence that we remark upon it.

Now, God forbid that we should shut our eyes to the true import of our Saviour’s question, “How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God

only?"—(John v. 44); that we should seek the praise of men as our direct, or chief reward; or lose sight of the spirit of the solemn warning given to us, that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God."—(James iv. 4.) But it is a mistaken spirit, which regards *all* praise of men as little short of evil; or which habitually, or even carelessly, neglects or sets at nought the dispositions which obtain men's favour. It is much nearer to the truth to say, that there is surely something wanting to the perfectness of that man's piety, how real and sincere soever it may be, in whom the favour both of God and man shall not be found united in a reasonable manner. And there is certainly a tendency in many of a more spiritual mind and bent, to render truth unlovely in its features, and much more unacceptable than it should ever be, by various errors in their social conduct, and in their ways of handling and presenting it to view in their own persons.

Thus, if a disposition more or less sincerely spiritual shall seem to be in any man a cloak for *indolence*; if, where we really believe some hungering and thirsting after righteousness to be, we still must be compelled to witness homes devoid of almost every innocent outward comfort, by reason of such indolence; can we refrain from grieving to behold the plain discredit attached to such persons, whom we fain would recommend, in higher points, as patterns to their fellows? The like is to be said, wherever piety shall be defaced by *harshness*, and by a want of courtesy and kindness: and much more still must we lament the sad disunion, if any where a livelier zeal for the Divine honour, and more decided relish for things spiritual, shall be

disfigured by *an overreaching spirit*, or by an *insufficient* care upon the points of punctuality and *honesty*.

Let us look to St. Paul's character and conduct, —his piety, his faith and zeal, his deep devotedness to God and Christ. These are qualities which know no difference of time, or place, or circumstance, such as can either change their nature, or our great obligation to desire and cultivate them. These are, consequently, a direct example for ourselves. *Our* faith, *our* piety, *our* zeal, *our* love to Christ, should be the very same in kind which the apostle's were. We serve the God whom he served; we trust in the Redeemer whom he loved; we look for that same day of reckoning which was the object of his faith and hope. That day will surely come: that Saviour still is found, alone, "the way, the truth, and the life:" with that Almighty Father is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." What dispositions, then, were fitting in St. Paul toward them, the same are equally required in us.

And just the same may be affirmed of the integrity of the apostle, and his kindness: these self-same qualities should also be in *us*, which were in *him*. That very kindness which he exercised among his brethren and companions, is just the same which we are called upon to exercise among ours. And can we doubt that *his* integrity should now be practised by ourselves? How else are we to prove *our* honesty and uprightness, except by keeping to ourselves that answer of a good conscience which supported him? "Receive us: we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." Digest these things; and you will see that the example of St. Paul still serves as *well to our own daily use*, as it could do if he were

living at this day among us, and were of our own home and nation: his combination of spiritual and social excellence should be ours.

Much more the example of our Lord Jesus should be ours. And here I would direct particular and close attention to the most instructive truth, that purity—a holy pureness—is one of the most special and distinctive features of the Saviour of the world. His meekness, kindness, long-suffering, and many, many other graces, are evident in all his life; but much of every one of these has been found also, and is seen, in many other righteous persons. And so indeed, up to a certain point, has there been evidence in others of the grace which we are now considering; but still, our Saviour's purity of heart and thought is something quite and specially *his own*.

There is in this something very peculiar. Holy as our Lord's apostles were, after the communication of the day of Pentecost, we can conceive of them, that, in the times before their calling, they might have fallen under some of the temptations common to man, in the respect of breach of purity. Indeed, we find St. Peter and St. Paul imputing such things to the disciples to whom they wrote.—(1 Pet. iv. 3; Tit. iii. 3.) But in our Lord's own character, and language, and demeanour, from the beginning to the end, there is not room for such a thought. I defy even a profane scoffer to read the history of Jesus Christ himself, and to attach to it, with any shadow of justice, one single notion of impurity. Take even the passages or incidents in Christ's history, which might most naturally give a possible occasion for such imagination; and you will find a spotless innocence, simplicity, and dignity, in *all his conduct*, which quite forbids the entrance of

any evil thought. Now, this deserves our best attention: for seeing, as we do, how thousands upon thousands fall beneath the snares of this besetting sin of *want of purity of heart*, and how exceeding great our need both was, and is, of such a perfect pattern on the want of pureness; we may well trace the wisdom and goodness of the Lord at once, in this so striking feature of our Saviour's human character—his absolute and perfect purity of heart and thought. God give us grace to read the proper lesson from it; namely, that "every one that hath this hope within him," (the hope of seeing God hereafter, and Christ our Saviour, as he now is,) will strive to "purify himself, even as He is pure."

Let the world be ever so impure, it is most sure that rest and peace are in the Gospel: a remedy for sin is there; there is a fountain to wash off uncleanness, and grace that may renew and restore our nature to the knowledge and love of God. Thousands of the faithful know this to be so, by positive experience: the Spirit of truth has shown it to themselves first, and then their lives have witnessed it to others. They have themselves believed their Saviour's words, and trusted in his strength; and they have found his goodness and his power in effects like these—produced within them no man knoweth how, but still most certainly produced, and growing up toward perfection. — (Mark iv. 26—28; John iii. 8.) A mist has been removed thereby from off their eyes, and they have seen things clearly. "Whereas they were before blinded, now they see."—(John ix. 25.)

Before, when they were either wearied with the contradictions of the world around them, or grieved with the oppressive burden of their own sins, they

could not find rest or comfort; and there was nothing to relieve them from perplexity, or shame, or misery. But since they now have *felt and understood the force of their baptismal promise*; since they have turned to, and believed on, Jesus Christ with all their hearts; “behold, all things have become new!” They have found out that the world, with all its profits and pleasures, is vanity, if blindly trusted in; but to those who do in earnest look for better things, there most assuredly “remaineth a rest, appointed for the people of God.” With respect to themselves, they have discovered a Redeemer, who has paid their ransom, and wrought their reconciliation with a Father in heaven. Him they have received, acknowledged, and obeyed accordingly; and they have found his gracious words made good: he has given rest unto their souls. Thenceforward they have grown in grace, in knowledge, and in holiness. Many signs are presently at hand to show it: they have now learnt to *love* the will of God, and wait upon his ordinances. Prayer has become to them a source of comfort and delight; no idle form, or task unwillingly performed, but verily their daily armour of defence against temptation, and in the seasons of distress: exceeding help, and health, and pleasure, have they found in it. God’s worship, and his holy day and house, have grown habitually dear to them; they have learnt, too, to seek the Lord at his own holy table. In short, they have in all things learnt to “love righteousness, and to hate iniquity; and therefore God, even their God, hath anointed them with the oil of gladness above their fellows.”—(Ps. xlv. 7, 8.) “The bones which were before broken, now rejoice.”—(Ps. li. 8.) They have been willing

to perform God's will; and they have learnt, according to Christ's saying, "of the doctrine, that it is of God."—(John vii. 17.)

Christian brethren, as you love the hope of your Christian calling—as you would cultivate, in pureness of heart, social and spiritual excellence—as you would enjoy in due season the happiness of heaven,—**forget not, neglect not, to pray heartily** for the assistance of that Divine Spirit which shall enable you to understand the things of God; and by understanding, to love them; and by loving, to pursue them.

As you are weary of the evil passions and cross humours of this life; as you feel, painfully feel, its burthens, and groan under its distresses; pray for that heavenly light which shall enable you to perceive clearly, and to be persuaded firmly, that there *are* better things elsewhere than this life affords: that there *is* a land, where the wicked shall for ever cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest; not merely in the silence of the grave, and in a rest where all things are forgotten; but in a place where love, and peace, and holiness, are the prevailing dispositions and the ordinary enjoyments; where every thing shall work together for the perfecting of happiness to them who shall, by faith and prayer, have laid sure hold upon the entrance thereinto—even on the Saviour Jesus Christ, who is "the way, the truth, and the life."

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Tracts for Englishmen.

SCHISM AND UNITY.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "DR. HOOKWELL."



LONDON:

EDWARDS AND HUGHES,

AVE-MARIA LANE.

1845.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

Schism and Unity.

2 THESS. iii. 16.

“Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means.”

OF the enemies that beset the Christian Church, schism is one of the most cunning, and most dangerous. Once throw off the sacred authority by which the truths of religion have been handed down, and what possible safeguard have we that those truths shall not suffer by addition, subtraction, or perversion? It is because of the melancholy results of separation, of the perversion of doctrine publicly, and the estrangement of kind and lovely feelings individually, that we must guard against the very entrance of schisms and divisions, and beseech all by the *name of our Lord Jesus Christ*—a name never pleaded in vain—to speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions.—(1 Cor. i. 10.) Schism is an evil not to be tampered with; not to be mollified, and excused, and argued away. We must look at the monster in its very face, and this with an apostolic eye. Its tendency is to overturn the kingdom of Christ, and thus the wicked world has an interest in the labours of every schismatic. See what our Lord said, as recorded in Matt. xii. 25. Schism is a work of the flesh: see 1 Cor. iii. 3; Gal. v. 19, 20; 2 Tim. iv. 3; 2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 8, 11—18; James iii. 13. Schism shuts out from the kingdom of heaven: see Gal. v. 20, 21; John xv. 4; Hebrews x. 25; 2 Thess. iii. 6; Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Tim. iii. 10; Matt. xviii. 17. Nothing is so injurious to *personal religion as a schismatical spirit*: indeed, it

is utterly inconsistent with the requisite devout breathings of peace and love, which constitute a Christian man. It sets at defiance St. Paul's entire delineation of charity, as given in 1 Corinthians xiii. There is no contentment connected with such a spirit; therefore it tries to make the worst of every thing, and cannot exclaim with the fervour and resignation of the apostle, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."—(Phil. iv. 11.) For schism in the church is what faction is in the state; it is an uneasy, intriguing, and malignant spirit. If carried to a great extent, it would undermine and overthrow any church, and put everything into confusion and weakness; just as faction would unsettle the government of any state, and render us uncomfortable and rebellious among ourselves, and exposed to the invasion of any foreign foe, who would be tempted by our distractions to take advantage of the weakness caused by them. Oh—as we said just now—what an interest has an unbelieving world in the schisms of the church!

But, before it be carried out to its wretched end, what unholy tempers and what envious bickerings does it cause! For those who separate must always be looking out for reasons to justify their separation; and thus they will be looking rather at the evil that is in everything, than at the good.—(1 Cor. xiii. 5.) They will become more and more wideners of the breach, and not healers. The party, too, from whom they separate, will deem themselves injured; and they, in their own defence, will be forced to answer for themselves, and it may be to recriminate—and this will nerve those who separate into still greater animosities and jealousies: and thus a growing violence and

ill feeling will become strengthened every day. And thus, in proportion as our charity becomes lukewarm, or utterly forsaking us, we shall view all things under a malevolent aspect, till we find too late the truth of the remark of an eminent divine—‘He that, from a charitable temper, relapses into a spiteful and rancorous one, is apostatized from one half of the religion of a Christian, and hath exchanged one of the fairest graces of a saint for one of the blackest characters of a devil.’ Alas! there are too many instances of men, eminent men too, who had once an honest zeal for the life and substance of vital religion, and made great conscience of “living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,” and of “crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts;” and who have felt that “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,” but rather “them that are meek shall he guide in judgment, and such as are gentle, them shall he teach his way;” who, afterwards becoming bigots to a sect or party, having directed the stream of their zeal into another and inferior channel—where its irregular current has made a greater noise, and gained more notoriety—filled the world with a loud and turbulent clamour about little things, and gathered to themselves partisans warm in the cry of liberty of conscience, and other political watchwords, while the grossest immoralities have been tolerated and connived at.

There is great danger to the soul in all this zeal and clamour of faction; for parties are led to utter words that best suit the temper of a factious audience, and are also led into contact with persons and principles from whom the good and humble men of heart had better keep aloof, if they are *really in search of the practice of vital religion and*

Christian love, and do not desire to place the greater part of their religion on those points on which men debate and divide. Whoever considers the subject calmly, must see that schism will ever bring dishonour and reproach on religion, weaken its moral power, be preventive of the conversion of neighbourhoods and the world at large, and thus tend to and be productive of infidelity. Schism has often led to the discussion whether Christianity be a real benefit to the world, by cherishing benevolence and love; or whether the public wars connected with its name, and the contentions in neighbourhoods, and feuds in families, do not rather stamp it as the instigator of virulence and passion, among a large portion of mankind. But let schism bear its own burden, and not shift it upon the bosom of our pure and benevolent religion: let it appear in its own proper deformities of pride and presumption, ever marked with gross injustice towards multitudes of good men who will not share in its intolerance, and become its blind partisans. It has been observed, that even Christ himself, in all the beauty of heavenly meekness and perfect virtue, would never conciliate the schismatic: and it is recorded as a fact, that, when Calvin preached in one church, and Viret in another, a celebrated character was asked why he did not come sometimes and hear the latter; to which he replied, 'If St. Paul should come and preach in the same hour with Calvin, I would leave Paul, and hear Calvin.' To such an absurd and irrational extent does the fury and blindness of party carry too many; and there is, above all, this danger in schism, that, as the pious Baxter once remarked, 'the sin of schism is commonly justified, and seldom repented of.' Even those who are separated

from the church soon find schism to be a serious evil; and they preach against, and endeavour to nip that in the bud, of which they themselves may be said to be in the full flower of guilt.

But, passing from the contemplation of so horrid a picture as that which is displayed in schism, or the schismatical spirit, let us very briefly think of the beauty of unity, and how pleasant and sweet a thing it is to dwell together in unity. Unity is the life and soul of every society or combination of men. Persons who associate together in unity for the furtherance of a virtuous cause, can achieve anything. It is through the preservation of unity, that the Christian Church has spread itself over the world; and, doubtless, upon this account, as well as for individual edification, did Christ and his apostles so constantly and earnestly exhort all Christians to observe, under all circumstances, this precious bond of peace and love. The man who now lives in unity with an apostolic church, provided that church exhibits no terms of sinful and unscriptural union, has the strongest precepts of Holy Scripture on his side, as well as the holy and happy practice of the primitive church, which was founded on those precepts of Scripture.

This unity was most remarkable in the first and purest ages of the church. St. Cyprian beautifully alludes to it in his book "On the Unity of the Church." He says, 'When our Lord approached nearest to the hour of his suffering, he said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." He gave this hereditary gift to us: he promised all his rewards and blessings on the preservation of peace. If we are heirs of Christ, let us remain in the peace of Christ. If we are the sons of God, we ought to be peaceful. "Blessed," he

says, "are the peace-makers ; for they shall be called the children of God." It behoves the children of God to be filled with peace, mild in heart, artless in speech, of one mind in affection ; holding faithfully to themselves in the bonds of unanimity. This unity was formerly seen in the time of the apostles. Thus the newly converted company of believers, keeping the commandments of the Lord, held their charity. The Divine Scripture proves this, which says, "And the multitude of them which believed were of one heart and of one soul," —(Acts iv. 32) ; and again, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."—(Acts i. 14.) And thus, because they prayed with efficacious prayers, so they obtained with confidence whatever they sought from the mercy of God.' And then this good father shows the difference between a self-denying and a money-getting age, and attributes the gifts of the blessings of God to the unity that prevailed.

In order to maintain this unity, there must be uniformity ; and, indeed, uniformity will spring out of a sincere and zealous unity. As in the management of families and households, so in matters of the church, men should not suffer themselves to be put out of temper on trifling grounds. It seems reasonable that Christian government, Christian discipline, and Christian mode of worship, should be everywhere as much alike as possible ; so that persons may perceive, at once, the rules and manners of the society to which they are joined, and, in cases of any miscarriage, know clearly where, and in what degree, lies the remedy.

This is surely reasonable ; but how should we *add veneration and beauty to reason*, if we could

think that we, in all things, were taking as our pattern those Christian ages when persecution had in some degree ceased, and the members of the church were freely worshipping God! During the three first centuries, if a Christian went from any one part of the world to another—from Persia to Spain, or from Pontus to Carthage—he was certain to find the same points of faith held by his brethren; and, wherever he journeyed, was sure of being admitted to communion. But, on the other hand, if he had been excluded from his own church, he also found himself shut out from every other church; and such care was observed on this point, that the churches gave letters to any of their members, which insured communion with their brethren in other countries. At this time the term ‘Catholic’ was in common use, and it was applied to the whole body of believers who were in unity. What if a church now was in all things like to a church in the days of the primitive saints and martyrs? Would it not be a testimony to the continuity and unchangeableness of the Christian religion—that religion which commenced in full strength and purity, and never can be improved by novelty? Our succession of bishops from the apostles is certainly no mean testimony to the truth of Holy Scripture; because, when the succession of bishops has been so strictly preserved, we may judge that also those sacred writings which support this succession would be equally preserved: and it is impossible to suppose that the churches of the apostles, and the agreement of brethren so faithful, so numerous, and who have handed down this succession, could not guarantee that their writings should be faithfully transmitted. And, indeed, *could we not* prove the authority of Scripture in

this way, the infidel would have a cause of triumph; for the first question which an unbeliever puts to a Christian is this:—‘Prove to me the authenticity and genuineness of your Gospels and Epistles, before I can trust to them as delivering the word of God; prove to me that they are the very words of Christ and his apostles, faithfully handed down.’ Saint Augustine, a father of the church beloved and esteemed by all Christians, has some admirable remarks on the succession of bishops from the apostles being a strong testimony to the truth of Holy Scripture: how would he have gloried in that succession being transmitted clearly to this day!

Thus does unity in the church serve to prove the general doctrines of Christianity; and this is an essential feature in the beautiful face of unity. And let us be assured now, that not only will unity and uniformity strengthen the evidence of the truth of the Christian religion at home as well as abroad, where the heathen, and Mahometan, and unbeliever, are inclined to interpret a mere want of external uniformity of discipline into disunion upon the very essence of our religion; but also, in an appeal to the unity and uniformity of the early and pure ages of the church, lies the only cure for schism and division. Whether several sects have contracted and narrowed the Christian faith, by reviving heresies condemned by the primitive church; or whether the Church of Rome has enlarged the Christian faith overmuch, by making or declaring new articles of faith in a later age of the world;—the creed or belief of the church, containing all points of faith necessary to be known by all Christians, should be reduced to what it *was in the time* of the first four general councils.

for no man dare say justly, that the faith of the primitive fathers was imperfect or insufficient. We say, justly; for, alas! as Bp. Wilson in his time observed, there are persons, of an evil nature, who 'ridicule the venerable fathers and councils of the primitive church after the most scandalous manner, and thereby deprive, as much as it is in the power of hell to do it, the Church of Christ of *their testimony to the truth, and of the then received sense of the Sacred Scriptures.*'

It may be that unity will never be universal on the earth, but then neither will goodness; and schism may never entirely cease, any more than sin will become unknown: but are we not ever, however hopelessly, to strive against the sin of the world? Let members of the church be thankful for the grace and privilege of belonging to a branch of the true, Catholic Church of Christ: Catholic, because it teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to men's knowledge, concerning things visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly; Catholic, because it draws under its light yoke, in order to godliness, every class of men, governors and governed, learned and unlearned, rich and poor; Catholic, because it universally treats and heals every sort of sins which are committed by soul and body, and possesses within itself every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and words, and in every kind of spiritual gifts; and Catholic in a more particular sense, in that which has been used to distinguish the veritable church from the heretical and counterfeit. And the more thankful we feel, the more let us observe a noble generosity and tender feeling towards all those who, either conscientiously or *malevolently*, cut themselves off from holy com-

munion with us, who use nothing in our public form of worship 'but the very pure word of God, the Holy Scriptures, or that which is agreeable to the same;' and who feel and know that the church has added nothing to the doctrine or discipline of the apostles: for she has done nothing inconsistent with the liberty and due ordering of a church, nothing that those who may differ from us do not find necessary in principle to do, nothing that could decently and conveniently be dispensed with. And let us feel assured, that a strict and conscientious adherence to the blessings of unity and uniformity is best consistent with the duties of charity and scriptural love and peace; for then our very practice preaches harmony and sweet concord to all. Who was more strict in the maintenance of unity, and rubrical observance, than the pious Bishop of Sodor and Man, the ever-renowned Bp. Wilson? And thus we read it recorded of him, that 'he was so great a friend to toleration, that the Papists who resided in the island loved and esteemed him, and not unfrequently attended his sermons and prayers. And the Dissenters attended even the communion service, as he had allowed them a liberty to sit or stand; which, however, they did not make use of, but behaved in the same manner with those of the Established Church. A few Quakers who resided on the island visited, loved, and respected him.' And it was Bishop Wilson who preached this most beautiful sentence (see Sermon 36):—'We are to be courteous and obliging towards all men. Charity speaks kindly, deals tenderly; grieves not the hearts of the living, and treads softly upon the graves of the dead.'

Members of the Church of England have not to look about for the true church, any more than

those settled and resident in a house have to search for one. They are already in the church by virtue of the baptism of the new covenant; that church which can exhibit the true notes of the Church of Christ. They are of the Protestant Church, because they protest against novelties, and in favour of pure antiquity; and thus may say in the memorable words of Bp. Hall, 'WE DO ONLY PROTEST THIS, THAT WE ARE PERFECT CATHOLICS. Let others look to themselves: *we are sure we are as Catholic as true faith can make us—as much one as the same Catholic faith can make us*; and in this undoubted right we claim and enjoy the sweet and inseparable communion with all the blessed members of that mystical body, both in earth and heaven; and, by virtue thereof, with the glorious Head of that dear and happy body, Jesus Christ the righteous, the Husband to this one Wife, the Mate to this one Dove: to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, three Persons and one God, be given all praise, honour, and glory, now and for ever. Amen.'

Christians! let there be no schism in the body.
—(1 Cor. xii. 25.)

"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all!"
—(2 Thess. iii. 16.)

. It may be profitable to state, that this Tract is taken from the work entitled "The Primitive Church in its Episcopacy" (Bentley); and of that book a high theological authority states, 'The facts and arguments here brought together have never yet been satisfactorily answered, and never will be while the world stands.'

Tracts for Englishmen.

SIN AND GRACE.

BY

BISHOP HEBER.



LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.
1845.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

Sin and Grace.

ROMANS vii. 24, 25.

“O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

It is related of a bloody tyrant in ancient times, or it was the fiction of the poets to describe the excess of tyranny, that it was his frequent and horrible pleasure to bind the living to the dead ; to condemn his lingering victims to endure for days and nights the cold embrace and loathsome touch of some swollen and rotten carcase, which they themselves were ere long to resemble, and with whose wretched dust their own was to moulder away. Such may be thought the bitterest dregs of human misery : yet hardly inferior, perhaps, to the reasonable soul of man, is the bondage and burthen of that mass of fleshly appetites, whose earthly bonds restrain its every nobler aspiration ; whose increasing corruptions pollute, while they destroy ; whose propensities tend downwards to their native clay ; and whose heritage are the grave and hell !

Nor must this hideous picture be regarded as the creature of imagination ; nor is it of his own

case only that St. Paul is speaking in Romans vii. 24, 25: though he, like other men, had felt the bondage which he mourns, and, happier than many men, had been greatly and gloriously rescued. It is a complaint in which every man must sympathise who has examined seriously his own heart and conscience; who has ever sought to forsake a single sinful practice, or attempted to cleanse his soul from the stain of a single unholy desire. Wickedness is often called blindness, and, as it should seem at first, with sufficient reason; since a course of wickedness is so utterly contrary to the visible interest of man, that none but the blind, it might be thought, would court their ruin. But if wickedness proceeded from blindness only, should we so often find, as we are unhappily doomed to do, that 'they who have eaten most largely of the tree of knowledge, are often furthest removed from the tree of life?' and that they who, of all men, best know their duty and interest, are often of all others most backward to follow either? The profligate whose vices are dragging him to an early grave, will tell you, perhaps with tears, that he knows, but cannot escape his danger; and many a man of lofty spirit and lofty understanding has mourned in secret over those pursuits by which his outward attention was engrossed. The inquiry would be too long here, to trace to its source that mighty strife between good and evil which is as old as all created things; in which the angels first, and afterwards our parents fell; and which, crushed as the serpent's head has been by Christ, continues still, and, till the final triumph of our Redeemer, must continue, to shake with its convulsive struggles the pillars of the universe. It is enough for *us to know that we are by nature sick unto death,*

but that we have a great Physician at hand to heal us. It is sufficient for us to recollect that we must not complain of evils for which a remedy is provided ; and that the apostle himself, who would seem to plunge us in despair by the picture which he draws of our natural condition, bursts forth immediately after into a noble exclamation of thankfulness to that God who hath delivered us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There are two points in this great deliverance, this dreadful ransom which the Son of God has paid for our souls by his own dying agonies, which, according to St. Paul's argument, could not be supplied by any human code of morality, nor even by the Jewish law itself, and the commandments given from Mount Sinai. The points are—pardon and grace; pardon for past offences, grace to enable us to lead new lives, and to make us less unworthy inhabitants of that heaven whither Christ is gone before. The one restores us to the same degree of favour with God which our nature possessed before its fall ; the other supports us against those temptations under which we must else, of necessity, again have fallen : and thus, by the Christian covenant, are boasting and despair alike excluded ; boasting by the sense of our natural want of means to please the Most High, and despair by the knowledge that the Most High himself is on our side, and that, if we fall not away from him, we may in security look on the assaults of our spiritual and fleshly enemies.

From what has been said, the following practical conclusions may be drawn. First, since our condition is by nature so perilous—since our passions are so strong, and our flesh so frail and prone to evil ; what constant vigilance do those passions

and propensities require, of which St. Paul complains so heavily? If we were shut up in the same den with a wild beast; if we were opposed to an armed enemy; if we were steering a vessel through an unknown sea, amid the dash of waves, and the glimmering of breakers;—we should need, I apprehend, no admonition to be watchful and diligent. Alas, my friends! our own hearts are wilder than the savage of the woods; our own hearts, uncontrolled, are more formidable than the deadliest enemy; our own hearts are more changeable and deceitful than the winds, the waves, the depths and shallows of the ocean. Watch, then, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Watch and pray! Without prayer to God, “the watchman waketh but in vain,”—(Psalm cxxvii. 1); and without an answerable watchfulness and care for our souls, displayed in the usual tenor of our lives and actions, our idle prayers will be only an offence to God.

Nor should the difficulty of the task hold us excused from attempting it; seeing that what is necessary to be done, it becomes us at least to try to do; and what God commands, we may be sure, he will also give us strength to accomplish. Of ourselves we can do nothing, but we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us; and the same glorious Being who commanded the lame to walk, at the same time gave his limbs ability to perform his bidding. So far, indeed, from the weakness of the flesh being able to destroy the hope of the sincere and industrious Christian,—“My grace,” says Christ, “is sufficient for thee,” (2 Cor. xii. 19); and the triumph of that grace is shown, not only in ennobling the reasonable soul *to subdue the body* wherein it dwells, but in sanc-

tifying that body into a temple of the Holy Ghost, and raising it hereafter from the grave to be a palace of unspeakable glory, wherein the pure and spotless soul shall through all eternity reside, to the praise of Him “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.”—(Phil. iii. 21.)

But in the promise thus held out of this gracious gift to men, the gift, according to the beloved disciple, of “power to become the sons of God,”—(St. John i. 12); in that promise itself, is implied a due recurrence to the outward means of grace, those instruments, if I may so speak, of God’s overflowing bounty to man, whereby we draw near to our Maker’s throne, and lay hold, like Esther in the Jewish annals, on the golden sceptre of his pardon, his support and favour. It is needful, not only to believe in Christ with our hearts, but to confess him with our lips unto salvation; not only to endeavour to glorify him in our lives, but devoutly to seek, through the channels of prayer, of hearing the word, and of study of the Scripture, and through the ordinances which he has left behind, that help from on high by which alone we are more than conquerors.

In the rite of confirmation, you renew, in your own persons, that solemn and blessed covenant which, in your infancy, was contracted for you by your sureties: you both profess before men, in express and solemn terms, your faith in your crucified Saviour; and you solicit, for his sake, and in the manner which his holy apostles have appointed, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. *And all who are religiously and devoutly disposed; all*

who feel the burden of their sins, and desire in future to live less unworthy of their calling; all who seek for help and life through the blood of Christ alone; and all who are in charity with their neighbours, forgiving those who have done them wrong, and desirous to make amends—so far as their power shall reach—to all those (if such there are) whom they have injured;—all such should partake in the solemn commemoration of the greatest and saddest mercy which ever was shown to man, and draw forth life and health to their souls, from the body and blood of their broken and bleeding Saviour. May you ever be occupied, brethren, in diligent self-examination, in frequent study of the Scriptures, and in frequent and earnest prayer. And not for yourselves only let those holy prayers be offered, but for us, who watch for your salvation; for those young plants of faith whom we are seeking to train up in the ways of peace and pardon; and for those heathen multitudes, whose eyes are bent on us for good or evil, and of all of whose souls, one day, a strict account must be rendered by every one whose example has made the way of truth be evil spoken of, and who have not employed to the good of their fellow men, and to the glory of the Most High, the abilities, the influence, the leisure, and the abundance, which the wise and good God has entrusted to them.

From Sermons preached in India.

BISHOP HEBER.

WHO has not heard of Bishop Heber, and his sweet parish of Hodnet, in the county of Salop? *and who that* has heard of them, has not loved

the one, and longed to visit the other? Even a stranger, on visiting the parish where Heber laboured and was beloved, could write thus:—"I sat down upon an old bench of heavy black oak, in the rector's chancel of Hodnet Church. The day was very beautiful; but the solemn quietness and mellowed light within the church were better suited to my mood. I was thinking of Reginald Heber: it was in that church, that he had led the worship of the great congregation, during the period of his ministry in England, until he was made Bishop of Calcutta. How often had his untravelled heart turned to his beloved parishioners in dear, dear Hodnet! and doubtless that country church, and the old familiar faces there, had often and often risen up before him, and been welcomed with blessings from his kind and loving heart. I thought of his farewell sermon in the midst of his sorrowing flock, and of the affecting description given of his departure from Hodnet. 'From a range of high grounds near Newport, he turned back, to catch a last view of his beloved Hodnet; and here the feelings which he had hitherto suppressed, in tenderness to others, burst forth unrestrained; and he uttered the words (which have proved prophetic), that "he should return to it no more!"' As I thought of him, I blessed that gracious Master, who, in calling his servant from the charge of a few sheep in this quiet spot, to make him the shepherd of the flocks upon a thousand pastures, had so graciously fitted him for his high calling; not only bestowing upon him many splendid gifts, but those meek and lowly graces without which no gifts of genius could have made him fit to be the minister of Him, who is at once meek and lowly in heart, and the great Shepherd

and Bishop of our souls. I thought of that which has always appeared to me the most blessed assurance of his growth in grace, and his ripeness for eternity; the prayer found, after his departure, in his book of private devotions:—‘O my Father, my Master, my Saviour, and my King! unworthy and wicked as I am, reject me not as a polluted vessel; but so quicken me, by thy Spirit, from the death of sin, that I may walk in newness of life before thee! Convert me first, O Lord, that I may be the means in thy hand of strengthening my brethren! Convert me, that I may be blessed to the conversion of many! yea, convert me, O Jesus, for mine own sin’s sake, and the greatness of my undeserving before thee; that I, who need thy mercy most, may find it in most abundance! Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief! Lord, I repent; help thou mine impenitence! Turn thou me, O Lord, and so shall I be turned: be favourable unto me, and I shall live; and let what remaineth of my life be spent in thy service, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. Amen.’ And, as I thought upon this prayer of a contrite and believing heart, I felt how many of those who praise Reginald Heber for the natural sweetness of his disposition, and his character, naturally lovely, among men,—how many think nothing of that disposition, and that character, which distinguished him as a renewed and spiritual man before his God! Had he rested in his natural character, it might have been said of him, ‘And Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest:’ he did not, however, rest in that fair and amiable character, but was taught by the *Gospel to form his opinion of himself; and on his*

tomb it might have been written, and written in sober truth, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’”

British Magazine, June, 1832.

THE DEATH OF HEBER.

The following is from the pen of a missionary clergyman, and beautifully gives us an idea of the loss sustained by the Bishop's death:—

“Three hours had hardly elapsed since his lordship left the church, when a rumour was spread in the Fort that his lordship had been taken dead out of the bath, in which he went after his return from the Fort. The first notice was brought to me by one of the catechists, who came running out of breath, and delivered the mournful news with bitter cries and lamentations. I could give no credit to the melancholy report, till it was confirmed by a note from the Rev. Mr. Wright, which informed me that our dear father was no more an inhabitant of this world.

“In the afternoon I called on Mr. Robinson: we shed our tears over the smiling countenance of our late dear departed father, and comforted ourselves with the thoughts of a better world, where there will be no sorrow, and where all tears will be wiped away. It is mournful indeed, to reflect upon the sudden and abrupt manner in which our dear father was removed from our eyes, when we were admiring the grace of God that appeared in him. To himself, however, death was gain. He died like a good servant of his Lord, who found him engaged in his proper work. But our loss by his departure seems irreparable. We have lost a father; and

this is a loss which God alone can make up. May he graciously grant that we may not be wholly disappointed!

“Early the following morning, I attended the funeral of our late revered father, which was conducted with all the honours due to his blessed remains. It was a mournful and affecting scene, indeed, which I have not witnessed since the death of the venerable Schwartz.”

Thus went to his last rest this noble and lowly man. It may be said of him, in degree, as was written of Barnabas, “He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith; and much people were added to the Lord.”

It may be well to add, that the works of Bishop Heber best known are his “Parish Sermons,” his “Life of Jeremy Taylor,” his beautiful Poem on “Palestine;” and the “Narrative of his Journeys in India,” now publishing in cheap parts by Mr. Murray, and to be had of any bookseller.

Tracts for Englishmen.

ST. STEPHEN:
DEATH FOR TRUTH.

BY THE
REV. W. GRESLEY, M.A.,
PREBENDARY OF LITCHFIELD.



LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.
1845.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

STADT- UND LANDESBIBLIOTHEK

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STADT- UND LANDESBIBLIOTHEK



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St. Stephen.—Death for Truth.

ACTS vii. 59.

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

AMONGST the seven deacons, none was more conspicuous, or more zealous, than St. Stephen. "Full of faith and power, he did great wonders and miracles among the people." So much zeal and courage could not fail of stirring up the anger and enmity of those who opposed themselves to the Gospel.

I need not recount the noble defence made by St. Stephen, when, (false witnesses having been suborned, the people stirred up, and he dragged before the council,) as he spake to them, all that sat in the council looking steadfastly upon him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel: nor need I describe the rage of his enemies when his words cut them to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. The Holy Ghost was with him in his sufferings, and supported him under all his trials. Yea, Jesus himself was revealed, looking on him from heaven, and beckoning him away from a world which was not worthy of him. He died with the prayer of faith on his lips, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

But I would beg of you to fix your thoughts on the well-known incidents of this scene, in order to learn how Christians ought to do and suffer in the

cause of truth. We are too much accustomed to look on such a scene as the martyrdom of the holy Stephen, as an event of former days—a trial never likely to recur. Living in peace and comfort, we regard a martyr with a mixture of pity and wonder, as a sort of enthusiast—a man of romantic and excited feelings, too good for the world we live in. I am persuaded that many persons of the present times would have counselled St. Stephen to have spoken more cautiously than he did. He need not, they would say, have expressed himself so warmly; he might have forbore to press his argument, since it served only to excite the anger of his adversaries. But Stephen spoke the words of truth. He testified against sin and error, as God gave him utterance; and in dying the death of a martyr, he received the reward of a saint.

Some again, perhaps, would say, St. Stephen did his duty manfully, as his conscience directed him: but surely it was unfortunate for the church. The church lost one of her most useful and valuable members; and, in consequence of Stephen's boldness, suffered grievous persecution. Hence, they would argue that, if not for personal reasons, yet for the church's sake, it is better to keep back unpopular doctrines which may cause offence, and give occasion to the enemies of the church to blaspheme.

But, be assured that such a course is most unworthy and unwise: we may not sacrifice truth for the sake of peace, even when, to worldly view, it may seem expedient. It so happens, however, that in the case of St. Stephen, we can point out *great advantages* which arose to the church from *the boldness* of his speech. True that Stephen

perished, and "devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him," and the church itself suffered persecution. But what was the result? The Christians driven from Jerusalem, were scattered throughout the regions round about; and wheresoever they went, they sowed the seeds ('under no assumption of the ministerial office') of the Gospel. Perhaps no one circumstance tended more directly to spread the kingdom of God, than that first persecution of the first Christians, which began with the martyrdom of St. Stephen. Thus was the church watered by the blood of the saints; and what, at first sight, seemed likely to have worked mischief,—perhaps, to have destroyed it in its infancy,—proved the eventual means of its strength and increase.

The same dispensation of Providence was strikingly manifested at the time of the Reformation of our own church. When Bishops Ridley and Latimer were led forth to martyrdom, "they brought," we read, "a faggot kindled with fire, and laid the same at Dr. Ridley's feet; to whom Latimer spake in this manner: 'Be of good comfort, and play the man: we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as, I trust, shall never be put out.'" Who knoweth whether the like may not again occur? Who knoweth whether the persecution of the church, if God should send persecution, may not again be destined to light the torch of zeal, and kindle such a spirit of energy as may be the means, under Divine Providence, of greatly advancing the kingdom of Christ amongst us?

Recollect, though the Gospel is a religion of peace, it brings peace only to those by whom it is

sincerely embraced; and not even to them certainly in this world, except that peace of soul with which the world intermeddleth not. To the ungodly and wilful it brings no peace, but the contrary. The very object of the church upon earth is to make war upon all sin, superstition, ungodliness, and error, without exception. Hence contention and opposition have always been its lot since the time when it first ‘turned the world upside down.’ The same spirit which moved the High Priests and Pharisees to enmity against Stephen; the same Spirit which stirred up an uproar amongst the workmen at Ephesus, when their craft was in danger; which called forth the contemptuous cavillings of the Greek philosopher, and the persecution of the Roman politician, and raised up heresies and schisms within the church itself;—the same Spirit will, in every age, war against the church, until one or other be subdued.

It is the bounden duty of us all, to temper zeal with moderation; and to maintain the cause of truth with firmness and decision, yet without falling into unchristian enmity, even against those who most sinfully oppose it.

How beautiful is the picture of united firmness and charity presented to us in the fourth chapter of St. John. We see our Lord shaded from the noonday sun, sitting at the well of Jacob, and engaged in friendly converse with a poor Samaritan woman; even condescending to ask a favour of her, and conferring on her a blessing in return. The woman is evidently surprised at his condescension; so different from what she had usually met with from his countrymen. “How is it,” said she, “that thou, being a Jew, askest water *from me, which am a Samaritan?*” And what is

the answer of Jesus? He does not tell her that there was no important difference between their creeds: that one person might go to heaven one way, and one another: that Jew and Samaritan were each alike, if they did but act up to their respective creeds. No. He tells her plainly, "Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews!" He tells her without reserve, that she was wrong, in so far as she adopted the Samaritan worship: and then proceeds to convince her of her personal sinfulness, and to offer to her that living water which He alone could furnish.

It is remarkable that, on several occasions in the New Testament, the Samaritans are spoken of in a favourable manner. I do not mean as a body, but as individuals. Thus, when the priest and the Levite passed by the wounded traveller and gave him no relief, it was the good Samaritan who went to him and bound up his wounds, and set him on his own beast, and carried him to a place of safety. And so when the ten lepers were healed, and one only returned to glorify God, it is added, "and he was a Samaritan."

Now what is the lesson conveyed to us in these passages of Scripture? We are plainly taught that it is our duty to renounce that bitter and personal hostility which was entertained by the Jews of our Saviour's time against those who had separated themselves from the church; and when we see those who dissent from us, in spite of their great disadvantages, 'doing justly, and loving mercy,' we should go and do likewise. We should never suffer any difference of religious belief to prevent us from doing those acts of personal kindness which are due from every man

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to his neighbour. If, like the good Samaritan, we saw a poor man lying wounded by the wayside, no one who had a spark of common humanity—no one, we might suppose, in his senses—would think of inquiring what religion he was of; our only thought would be to staunch his wounds and save his life. We should see him only in the light of a brother suffering under misfortune—a neighbour who required immediate aid. And such should always be our feeling. If our differing brethren are hungry, we should feed them; if they are thirsty, we should give them drink; if naked, we should clothe them; if sick and afflicted, we should visit them: and under any circumstances we should behave to them with kindness and courtesy. That it is our duty to do this may surely be gathered from the whole tenor of the lovely Gospel.

But we do not gather from the same Gospel that we are to do this because our religious differences are of no importance. They may be of the utmost importance. We do not learn from Scripture that it is our duty to speak lightly of the sin of separation from the church. St. Paul says, "I beseech you, mark them which cause divisions and offences among you contrary to the doctrine which ye have received; and avoid them."—(Rom. xvi. 17.) And again, how solemnly to the Thessalonians, "We command you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."—(2 Thess. iii. 6.)

We may be assured it is no less hopeless to expect peace, than it is sinful to seek it by *unworthy means*. It is related of the Roman Em-

peror, Tiberius, that he offered to place the statue of our Lord Jesus Christ amongst the gods of the Capitol, but the Christians would not consent to such a profanation. And we should worship God, and him only, banishing every other idol from the heart. Every darling sin, all covetousness, and vain-glory, and selfishness, and love of ease, or whatsoever sin or vanity besets us, these we should sacrifice at once in obedience to the love of God. It might tend more to peace, if the preachers of the Gospel were to wink at error in opinion, or corruptness in practice; but what would be the value of such a peace? The Gospel might be more popular, if we preached against the errors of former centuries, and passed by our own; but what then would be the value of our doctrine? No; we must not prophesy smooth things, and cry Peace, peace, when there is no peace. It is our duty to make war with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, against whatever sin is unsubdued in the heart—whatever error in belief—whatever irregularity in practice. And it is just the popular sins, and prevailing errors of the day, against which its power should be directed. Our Saviour did not preach to the Jews about the errors of the Gentiles; nor to the Sadducees against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees; nor to the Pharisees against the ungodliness of their Sadducean brethren. So, in this day, the errors of the age in which we live must not be attacked and spoken against.

Are we prepared, while earnestly seeking peace, to give up peace before truth, and to contend earnestly for the faith? If great sacrifices were required for the truth's sake, are we prepared to make them? Are we 'able to drink of the cup

which Jesus drank of, and to be baptized with the baptism which he was baptized with?" Could we die for the truth like Stephen? or should we be found among those who, like Demas, forsake the Gospel for the love and ease of this present world? or, like the seed scorched by the sun, if tribulation and persecution were to arise because of the truth, should we be offended and fall away? God give to all of us grace to know what things we ought to do, and faithfully to fulfil the same: then we shall be enabled to bear our testimony to the truth, and live to the glory of God the Father; and then will Jesus look down with kindness on us in our hour of suffering, and receive our spirit into his glorious presence.

Meanwhile, let us remember, "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting!" *We must sow to the Spirit.* We must pre-occupy the ground of the heart with good grain. Thus only can we exclude what is evil. "Walk in the Spirit," says St. Paul, "and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Show forth your faith then, my friends, and your courage for the truth, by living in all the ordinances and the laws of God blameless, doing all you can for the honour and glory of God. And to this end, be not satisfied with any one line of duty, or any partial observance of his laws, but be making continual efforts to do more and more in his service. Like the converted Magdalen, offer largely of your substance to the Lord. Like Martha, give your personal services in well-regulated and diligent activity. Like Mary, kneel at

your Lord's feet, and receive the instruction of his church. Make much of every thing which you are taught; gather up every crumb which falleth from his table. Like Peter, be ready to do or to suffer for his service, to range yourself on the Lord's side, and be bold and valiant for the truth: this is an acceptable service. And then, like the holy St. John, you may lean confidently on the breast of Jesus: he will be to you a staff, a guide, and a friend. Then Christ will dwell in your hearts by faith; then will you have access to grace more and more abundantly: your hearts will be purified—sanctified—comforted: you will overcome the world, and all its sins and vanities: you will contend more earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints: you will seek and accept the truth as it is in Jesus: you will offer your souls and bodies unto God an acceptable and holy sacrifice: like the martyred St. Stephen, you will be ready willingly and thankfully to die in your Saviour's cause, and you will "receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

*(Extracted from a Volume of
"Parochial Sermons.")*



Tracts for Englishmen.

THE RIGHT MIND.

BY

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DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.



LONDON :
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.
1845.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

The Right Mind.

MARK v. 15.

“Sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.”

WITH every heart that Christ has set free, he has left this charge, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.”—(Mark v. 19.) Into all social life, this light penetrates. Every man is to be to those around him a living preacher of the power of the Redeemer: he is to walk among his fellows as a witness for Christ. From him, too, the powers of evil have been banished (as in the case of the demoniac, Mark v. 18, &c.); for him life wears another countenance: he is no longer, if he lives, as he may, under the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost, the slave of dark, or sensual, or furious, or earthly spirits. Silently it may be—meekly and unobtrusively it must be, but yet most truly

—he is to bear witness to that mighty Deliverer, who found him out in his extremity, and broke the fetters which had bound his spirit. Those who mix with him in society, in business, in family life, are to feel that he is another man; that his is a spirit set free; that he is *sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind* (Mark v. 15); that he is acting on high motives; that there is in him nothing that is untrue, nothing impure, nothing which separates him from a holy, charitable intercourse with others round him. They are to feel, that he has learned the law of brotherhood which binds all men together, and perceived the special charge which has been laid upon himself.

This, brethren, if the grace of Christ is reigning in us, is the light which must break forth from our new life: it is thus that Christ is to preach through us, through us to heal those around us. And He will work through us, if we are faithful to our charge. We need not acquiesce in all the evils of the world: Christ has sent us into the world to testify of him, the Healer of its evil. True Christian men, in their own station, do raise the tone of life around them: in a thousand little instances which are occurring daily, they are bearing a witness for truth, for sincerity, for reality, for purity, for meekness, for self-denial, for a spiritual life, which is not lost. Nay, it is, in truth, through these smaller instances, that God for the most part *works*. The great instances which shine forth

every now and then, and are in all men's mouths, are themselves, if they have anything real in them, the fruits of those thousand less, unobserved acts of truth and holiness, with which, as with the morning dew, the lives of his saints have been perpetually gemmed. And this is to be one great encouragement to us to labour, that Christ will thus graciously accept and bless it even to those who may never know us. For so it is, that, most secretly, society is leavened for good or for evil. How many holy men have prayed and waited long upon their Lord for strength, and suffered and resisted temptation, and crushed the evil self within, and so borne their witness for Christ, before any evil influence in society was uprooted, or any holy and true principle established, or widely spread abroad. And thus their secret struggles, their slowly ripened Christian grace, have become the blessing of the church around them; even as the strong foundations of those coral islands of the southern seas, which are now so rich and verdant with the prodigal upgrowth of grass, and flower, and tree, were wrought silently in the chambers of the deep by thousands of living beings, which were never seen by those who have entered into their labours. And we may have a sure confidence, that so it will be with our labour, if only it be wrought in truth and faith; because we have a charge from Christ, and he will not fail us in fulfilling it.

And if this is our first lesson, our second lies

close beside it. It is, that our own safety must consist in thus working for Christ.

Even as from the recovered demoniac, (Mark v. 20) so from us, also, the powers of evil are to be kept off by our active fulfilment of our own charge. For they lie in wait for us, even as they did for him. All the turns of our life, if it be not spent in Christ's presence, expose us to danger. In our daily use of the abundance of all things, does not the evil spirit of selfishness lie, as in ambush, ready to seize on us and bind up our soul in bars of iron? or, if we lack all things, are not the devices of envy, bitterness, and hatred, ready to seize on us? And so it is with all our life: business threatens to make us worldly; leisure, shallow and frivolous; ease, to make us thoughtless of those around us; sorrow, to make us sour towards them; a full provision of meats and drinks, to make us sensual; the lack of them, to lead us to dishonesty: in success, self-confidence chokes modesty, and in danger and extremity, expediency and falsehood easily bear down our faith in what is right and true.

Surely, then, the spirits of evil do threaten us; they are ready to sweep on us, to make us their prey; and only in our Saviour's presence are we safe. And how may we cling to that? How, but by labouring for him? This, of his grace, shall be our strength. For, if we thus enter on our *work*, *he will* be with every one of us. Every

outward thing will have for us a ministry from him. Soon shall we learn all the secrets of ready sympathy and self-humiliation. And so, through our whole life, living as those who have a charge from Christ will be to us a constant safeguard. Sorrow, instead of embittering our hearts, will open in them sweeter and deeper fountains: success will make them watchful; failure, render them humble; nay, the commonest things will be ministers of good: in them there will be a discipline for our tempers, and from their use, we shall obtain a power of applying high principles to little things. Meats and drinks will become a bridle upon appetite; the cross accidents of each hour, a check upon the inner spirit of impatience, fretfulness, irresolution, and self-will; and common family life will turn for us into a school of holy thoughts and careful self-control.

We see, then, what a serious thing life is, even in its smallest parts. It is, indeed, brethren, a serious thing to live, and it is well that we should force ourselves to remember this, for all the outer world conspires to make us forget it. But it is a serious thing to live; serious both to ourselves and to others. To others, because all our life has its influence on them; because, if we live unchristian lives, we throw away a ministry of mercy, which might have saved some of them; because the very lowest of us cannot waste his own life, and not injure other men; because we cannot be untrue to

ourselves, without being untrue to them. For the evils we should heal, we aggravate; that faith in Christ as the Healer, which we should confirm, we subvert; we drive from him those whom we should have won to him; and all this we do, without directly meaning to injure any. Every selfish principle and every sinful act of ours give to the like principle and act some currency somewhere. Sin has in it a fruitfulness in evil, the limits of which none can calculate. We must be doing evil to others if we are not blessing them in Christ's name. And if for others it be thus a serious thing to live, far more is it for ourselves. For our life, in its various, unmarked, silent stream of every-day thoughts, words, and actions, is passing into ourselves—is becoming ourselves. We are, through its power, thus drinking in, and glowing with, the brightness of Christ's presence, or we are sinking back from him, and coming again under the shadows of the powers of evil, from whom he redeemed us. And we know not how entirely we may be given up to them.

Let us, now, strive to subdue wholly every separate sin to which we are tempted. If we allow any one to continue, all our work is in vain. All our other labours, all our religious offices, all our prayers are in vain, if we suffer any sin to abide in our hearts. It is a poison root, which will kill all the verdure of the soul. Here is where so *many* fail. They are conscious of some evil,

which has such a hold upon them, that they do not either strive against it at all, or strive faintly, and as those who expect to be subdued. They do not mean to give up all, far from it; they mean to be religious, and so they pray, perhaps, and give up other things, and have religious feelings, but they do not bring them to bear on this cherished form of evil, on their own weak point. Life is, thus, nothing better than a miserable self-contradiction; it is a child's passion, a fickle day of storm and sunshine, the dream of fever, or the aimless confusion of delirium. There can be neither place, shape, nor order, nor keeping, in the life of the half-hearted man. To love God, to serve him, this alone gives order, meaning, and blessedness, to every separate act of our lives. The want of this makes the highest acts of religion utterly worthless, and unmeaning; in vain we say prayers, in vain we read God's word and hear it, in vain we deny ourselves, and fast, give alms, and communicate, unless there be this one ruling principle governing our lives; and where this indeed is, the commonest actions become acts of religion: if they are done to please Him, our little daily instances of self-denial grow into real sacrifices; common offerings become true oblations; not prayer only, and alms, and receiving the holy eucharist, but every deed of kindness to a neighbour, nay, every meal, every action, all are holy things, sanctified by the word of God and

from all the multitude around him ; he proves what is the will of God concerning him ; and, in a little while, when the Lord has made him able to support its glory, he will show himself unto him, and take him into the full joy of his unveiled countenance, in the paradise of God.

Tracts for Englishmen.

THE GLORY OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

BY

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ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER.



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LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.

1845.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

The Glory of the Righteous.

MATTHEW xiii. 43.

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

IT has pleased God to ordain that even the righteous shall die; that they shall be bowed and bent with ills of the flesh, scathed and withered up by the powers of the visible world, by cold and heat, and pestilence, and famine, and the like; that their earthly nature shall be as it were warred upon, and beat down, and brought into bondage, by the strife of matter. The earthly bodies of the holiest are oftentimes ‘marred more than any man’ by sharp pains, and lingering anguish, and fearful forms of fleshly evil; or if not so afflicted, yet we see the faculties of nature decay, the sight wax dim, and the ear heavy, and the whole man grow weak and weary, and spent with bearing the burden and the load of a sinking body. “In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and

the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail,"—(Eccles. xii. 3—5); then it comes to pass, that the wisest of men turns again to the wandering of a child; the most piercing reason is as dull as if it were worn away; the memory is misleading and confused; and all the intellectual powers seem to be suspended and confused.

But there is a mystery of humiliation far greater than this, into which, also, the righteous are permitted to enter. It is most certain, that they partake moreover of what may be called the spiritual decays of old age. Sometimes, indeed, the righteous depart like Moses, the servant of the Lord, who "was an hundred and twenty years old when he died," and yet "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated;" but if we look at Jacob, and Eli, and David, and Solomon, and many more, and at many also of whom we read in the history of the church, or whom we ourselves see around us, we shall discern that the decays of nature are felt also in the powers and habits of the spiritual life; and the moral failings which beset old age, gather even about those in whom is the gift of righteousness. *We see them, for instance, more or less,*

under what may be called the powers of dissolution. Even the best of men, when they grow old, become credulous, and irresolute, and of a weak will, and feeble in self-control—and are quickly kindled, and haunted by false fears and fanciful suspicions—and break out into little eccentricities—and are sensitive if remarked upon, or resisted, or advised.

And these little mists rise up, and draw a haze over the brightness of the spirit. Without doubt, the righteous, who have made provision, by self-discipline and restraint of temper, in the time of strength, have a great and visible advantage over all others; yet it is not to be denied that even they, when they come under decay, enter into the shadows of our human infirmity.

But as, in the kingdom of nature, the powers of life are often secret and hidden, without a visible presence; and like as Christ's kingdom in the world has a deep root, striking out on every side, changing things inwardly into its own likeness, revealing itself outwardly by signs and tokens and a visible form, but is itself hidden and invisible; so has it ever been, and ever shall be, with the righteous. They look like other men: they have the same wants, the same toils, the same gains and losses, the same sicknesses and decays, the same besetting infirmities of a fallen nature: though there be something in them, like the hidden life in nature, and the inward Spirit in the church, which

often makes itself felt from within, and seems to be at the point of showing itself openly to the world, yet it still lies under a veil. The light of the righteous does indeed "shine before men," but not in all its fulness; enough to bespeak the gift that is in them, but not to unfold its breadth and glory.

But this gift of righteousness which now lies hid and obscured in us, shall hereafter be unfolded in its perfection in the kingdom of God: that is to say, when all things are fulfilled, and the end is come, and the righteous shall have passed through all the changes which lie between the decay of our mortal bodies and our perfect renewal in the image of God—that is, at the resurrection, when the whole man, in body, soul, and spirit, shall be raised from the dead, "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun." By "the kingdom of their Father," therefore, is meant the kingdom of the resurrection. Then shall all that here lay hid in them be unfolded: all shall be perfect, and enlarged to an ineffable perfection. The body in which we have groaned, "being burdened;" in which we have often fainted, and fallen back from "the law of the Spirit of life;" in which we have been bowed down to earth with blindness, and deafness, and deadness of powers and sense—even that same earthly frame shall be full of life, and penetrated with the light of heaven. There shall *be in it no more* any law warring against the law of

the spirit; no division of the man against himself, no strife in the being of the righteous; but the glorious body shall be the glad minister of a holy will, and quickened by the pervading unity of the glorified spirit. And we know that "they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead," cannot "die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—(St. Luke xx. 35, 36.) Nay more; we shall bear the likeness of the Son of God, of whom we read, when he appeared to St. John, that "his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength."—(Rev. i. 16.)

And yet the glory of the body would seem to be chiefly but the manifestation of the glory of the spirit. Then shall our regeneration be fulfilled. "We shall be like Him; for we shall see him as he is." What this mysterious likeness may mean, it is not for us too curiously to inquire. Certainly we know that every saint, while on earth, has had impressed upon him by the hand of God, his own definite character; and yet all have been likened to their Lord. All their several features of distinctness were comprehended in the perfect mind of Christ. They were all conformed to him; they were all knit in unity together, by their universal likeness to one common pattern; and so shall they doubtless be hereafter, when the faint beginnings of perfection shall be unfolded in the fulness of

God's kingdom. All the bonds and fetters of imperfection, all the heavy burden of earth and sinfulness, and all that checked the energies of their regenerate spirit, shall be abolished; and all that was in them of heaven and of God—all holy affections, and pure thoughts, and righteous intentions, shall break forth into the perfection of glory. All that Noah, Daniel, and Job, or David, and Paul, and John, sought and strove to be, by self-chastisement, and prayer, and righteousness of life, such they shall be, at "the manifestation of the sons of God." We now see, in those around us, that each one has some characteristic feature: in the mind of one we see a deep wisdom; of another, a saintly meekness; of another, an angelic contemplation; of another, a burning charity; each one being a law, a pattern to himself. We see, too, that this characteristic feature is ever coming out into a fuller shape, drawing towards its own perfect idea. So we may believe that, in the kingdom of the resurrection, all the gifts of God, all graces of the heart, and all endowments of the sanctified reason, shall then be made perfect: all the inscrutable features of the spiritual being of each several man shall be perpetuated; and then shall all differences be harmonized in the perfection of bliss, as all hues are blended in the harmony of light. Each one several and distinct, even as here, so shall he be there; each one shining forth in his *own blessedness*; and yet the song of the re-

deemed, the everlasting chant of "all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues," is but one; their voices without number, yet but one accordant hymn. So shall all perfection, and all righteousness, and all bliss, and all thanksgiving, be perfect in every saint, and united in one heavenly glory which shall encompass the righteous.

O wonderful and blessed thought, that the gift which is in us shall one day have the mastery over all obstructions; that all sins, and faults, and weaknesses, and ignorance, and all decay and wandering, and all the clouds which rest upon mortality, and all the hinderances of the world, (that bitter, treacherous world, still at enmity with God, and fulfilling the law that every man who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,) and of the flesh, shall be taken away; and that we shall be ripened into a mysterious perfection of the spiritual being! Blessed thought, and full of refreshment and calm to the weary and heavy laden! one day all their oppressions shall be rolled back from them, and they shall shine forth as the sun. By temptation, by wrestlings against evil, by crucifixion of self, by wrongs and snares from without, by sorrows and afflictions from above, every brother of the First-born in the family of man will bear His likeness, and be perfected by the keen edge of pain. By this long-drawn and weary strife, our patience, meekness, faith, perseverance, boldness, and loyalty to Christ

are ever tried ; and by trial made perfect. When the Son of God himself passed into the heavens, he began to draw after him a glorious train of saints ; like as the departing sun seems to draw after him the lights which reflect his own splendour, till the night starts out full of silver stars. So shine the saints in an evil world ; rising and falling above the boundaries of earth, in steadfast and silent course, till all are lost in the brightness of the morning : and so shall the firmament of the church break forth with the glory of the resurrection. But now, for a while, it tarries : some saints are yet in the mid-heaven, and some are yet to rise upon the world ; and, till all is fulfilled, the desire of the church unseen is stayed with the “white robes,” and the sound of the Bridegroom’s voice.

Meanwhile, let us beware how we judge one another. Who knows what may lie hid in the man whom we slight and cast out as of no esteem ? Who can say how he may outshine his fellows in the kingdom of the resurrection ? “We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour : how is he numbered with the children of God, and his lot is among the saints ! Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us.”—(Wisdom v. 4, 6.) Wonderful and overwhelming, to behold at that day the resurrection of the righteous, each *one shining forth in his own distinguishable splen-*

dour! "Then shall we know, even as also we are known;" and there shall be strange overrulings of our blind judgments. Many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. The poor man thou didst despise an hour ago, shall sit higher than thou at the marriage-supper of the Lamb; and the simple and unlearned, and the lowly and slow of speech, whom the learned, and eloquent, and lofty, and prosperous, have despised as mean and foolish, shall be arrayed in exceeding brightness, before which they which despised them shall be dim and naked. Let us also beware how we give much care or thought to any thing but to the perfecting of our hidden life. What else is worth living for? What else shall endure at Christ's coming? Most awful and searching day, when "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days!" Let us, therefore, live ever waiting for that hour. What matter though we be poor, slighted, slandered, forgotten, moving in the shadows of the world, so that we attain unto a glorious resurrection? O most glad hour, when it shall dawn towards the first day of the everlasting week; when there shall be a making ready in the heaven above, and in the earth beneath; when legions of angels shall gather round the Sun of righteousness, and all orders and hosts of heaven shall know that the time for "the manifestation of the sons of God" is come. What

joy shall there be, at that hour, in the world unseen ! and what a thrill, as of a penetrating light, shall run through the dust where the dead are sleeping ! When was there ever such a dayspring since the time when "God said, Let there be light, and there was light ?" He shall come, and all his shining ones ; ten thousand times ten thousand, whose countenances are "like lightning," and their "raiment white as snow ;" all the heavenly court, angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim—clad in unimaginable splendours : and the righteous shall arise from the grave, and the earth shall be lightened with their glory ; they shall stretch forth their hands to meet Him, and bow themselves before the brightness of his coming. O blessed hour, after all the sorrows, and wrongs, and falsehoods, and darkness, and burdens of life, to see Him face to face ; to be made sinless ; to shine with an exceeding strength ; to be as the light, in which there "is no darkness at all !" Be this our hope, our chiefest toil, our almost only prayer.

*Extracted from a Volume of Sermons,
Fourth Edition, 1845.*

Tracts for Englishmen.

THE HOLY GOSPELS.

BY THE

REV. ISAAC WILLIAMS, B.D.,

LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.



9

"In thine unchanging care I would repose,
Thine eye of watching, which doth never close!"—
THE CATHEDRAL.

LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.

1845.



[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

The Holy Gospels.

ST. JOHN vi. 63.

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

THE mind of Christ is the very opposite to the mind of the world, of that which we see and hear around ; and the more we withdraw ourselves from this outer state of things, in order to understand His sayings, and observe his doings, the more do we come to that mind which is the truth itself. But the world will ever be busy, not only to instil into us another lesson, but to persuade away even the lesson of Christ itself ; to suggest something of its own, instead of the meaning of the Spirit : the world comprehends not its spiritual depth and power. The instrument with which it would fathom unsearchable deeps, is human reason, not faith. Human expediency is the court which it would establish in order to explain divine laws : it will tell us, that the commands of the Gospel interfere not with modern practices—because they suit them not—but speak of ancient times and custom. O blind man, whoever thou art, that art travelling to that unknown country from which none hath returned, with no one but He that holdeth this divine light to guide thee ! let not such worldly wisdom entice thee ; for, if thou wouldest be wise with the wisdom of Christ, thou wilt appear a fool to the many around thee : yea, what if thou even *appear, as Christ himself to his own brethren, as*

one "beside thyself?" Listen not to them who say, "The narrow way, and the strait gate, was for them of old, and spoke of persecutions; but the wider path is for thee." Let not the difference of nation, nor of age, nor of custom, deter thee from entering into the fulness of that knowledge, to which Christ inviteth thee in the Gospels. Say not, "This was needful for them, but less is required of me;"—for this is to put away from thee the mind of Christ, and to take the world to thee again, to be thy counsellor in things divine. If thou needest an interpreter,—for thou art thyself, by nature, blind,—take no other interpreter but the Spirit; let Christ himself be thine interpreter, who dwelleth ever in the union of his church. Thither go thou, as to the pool of Siloam, and there wash away the earthly clay, the affections of the carnal mind, from thine eyes, that thou mayest see. Say not, "Christ spake thus to them of old, but not so now to us:" know rather, that, as the Scriptures of old set forth the Gospel in type and shadow; so doth the Gospel itself set forth, in living type and emblem, that which is now. For as of old in the flesh, so is Christ now in his church; as seen by that faith which would realize things unseen, amid things that are beheld. How does He still go about in mourning, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as among the disciples of old, wandering from place to place, with no where to lay his head!—for he can find no place of rest but in the pure and undivided heart. He in whom Christ dwells must still be as his Master, "without form or comeliness," and "rejected of men." Outwardly, indeed, in that aspect which the world presents, it is all activity; "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord;" and, "Lo!

here is Christ, and, Lo ! he is there." But where is that pastor who would wish to have no thought but to win souls unto Christ ? How is he daily among a few solitary worshippers ! and even they, when he would lead them on to that which is mysterious and divine, seem to go back ; and of them, in the solitude of the heart, he seems to say, " Will ye also go away ? " (John vi. 67.) In his own temple, Christ preacheth now as of old ; and is there, in his own pastor, as one that mourneth. But when, perchance, He sitteth in the vestibule, and among the costlier offerings of the rich, he may find the spirit of that poor widow with two mites ; and, to soothe the aching heart, a gleam of worth among Christ's little ones. He is still to be seen in his poor ; for where suffering humanity is, there is He, as he has promised. And He is to be seen in his servants, to whom he has given charge ; for where his spiritual authority is, there is He as he has promised. The holy church of Christ—

" She shows her suffering Lord throughout the wild, ⁱ
 Still shows her suffering Lord to her faint wandering child."

Wonderful are the changes of providence, while, under various and manifold circumstances, it is still eliciting and setting forth to view the same form of evil and of good : and faith and unbelief still wait on Christ in his kingdom, in essence the same, though continually assuming a new form and aspect. Such as were under the law, come forth again under the Gospel. And, disclosed in a new shape, the old enemies of Christ are still with us. The stubborn Jew, that strove with Moses in the wilderness, and the impenitent idolater that mocked at Jeremiah, were again seen, in the garb of the over-righteous Pharisee : and Korah, Dathan,

and Abiram, had put on the robe of Caiaphas, and said, "We will not have this man to reign over us!" In altered semblance, it was still that enemy of old; and that same also is now seen in pride of place, despising Christ in his "little ones," and hating Christ in him who calleth to mourn and leave the world. And there is Judas, also, now, though he carrieth not the bag, nor walketh bare-foot; yea, haply, may be clad in state, while he heapeth up riches to himself,—and, it may be, even from the revenues of Christ's Church and poor, entrusted to him. And Martha, too, is engaged about much serving, and would show forth glad welcome and much abundance, but complaineth of Mary, that sitteth idle, because she is at Christ's feet to hear his words,—knowing nothing, and desiring to know nothing, but of "that good part" which she hath chosen. Yea, even now, the proud Pharisee entertaineth thee, but with cold welcome; for he loveth little, because he hath been forgiven little; and he hath been forgiven little, because he thinketh that he hath but little that needeth forgiveness. (Luke vii. 47.)

But where, save in thy blessed Gospels themselves, shall we find the love and the faith of thy holy apostles? In these we must live; into these portals we must enter; and in these must we ever be, that we may be with them. There do I behold thine own beloved disciple, on whose outward form the painter labours to bestow youth and beauty; as if that, within his soul, which rendered him lovely in thine eyes, must needs render him lovely in the eyes of all mankind! but thou hadst thyself no "form nor comeliness," and when we behold thee, "there is no beauty that we should desire" thee: but I see him full of contemplation

of things divine and heavenly; and love, as a stream of light from thee, around all his actions and his words, and seeing, in all thy words, what others understood not, and what even Peter did not comprehend. And holy Peter, too, is there, as one in a struggle between divine fear and human energy,—the one drawing him back into the shade, and bidding him stand afar off; the other urging him on to be the chief of the apostles,—until both divine fear and human energy were lost and overwhelmed in the love of his Master, for whom he was willing to endure the loss of all things.

But, oh! let me turn from all; from proud Pharisees, that stand aloof in scorn, and from the company that throng thee, and from thine own apostles, to hear thine own gracious words! Make that unpleasing unto me, which doth not savour of thy poverty; that I may have sympathy with thy poor, and in them, with thee: let “the zeal of thine house eat me up;” that I may appear vile and “base in mine own sight,” (2 Sam. vi. 22,) if transported with righteous indignation against the pollutions of thy sanctuary, and, by mine own abasement, hallow and glorify thy name. And so at length, from the evil of the world and the strife of tongues, may I long to be hid with thee, thinking over thy words, and living in thy Gospel: of these may my meditation be day and night. May this contemplation be my daily food, and the light of mine eyes! that, whatever else I read, it may all come to this; and, whatever else I see, it may all come to this: that this may be to me the treasure hid in a field, in secret meditation; that it may be to me, in the world, the net that gathereth *of every kind*; that I may become wise unto thy *kingdom*, and, of thy treasures, “bring forth things

new and old," in order the better to understand thine evangelical word. Open unto me the great deep of thy wonderful counsels, that I may be ever trading therein, as the merchant seeking goodly pearls, till I find that pearl beyond all price,—the knowledge of Christ crucified ! In this, one man differeth from another ; there is no other distinction among mankind but this : rich and poor, learned and ignorant, noble and mean,—between them all, there is no real diversity, but in this alone—in the evidence which the soul hath attained of things eternal, the substantial reality which it hath learnt by proof of things hoped for.

This, therefore, I crave mercy that I may attain unto ; this I would seek to know, that I may look on those things of which I speak as divinely true, and concerning unto me, more than those things which I behold around ; that I may apprehend and lay hold of thee, who art the "Truth and the Light." And, that I may apprehend thee, I must pray : and I cannot pray, unless thou first apprehend and draw me after thee, by the sweet fragrance of thy love constraining me. Helpless by the roadside, and blind, I lay, and begging help of all that pass : and thou art passing by, going thy way to the heavenly Jerusalem, and art almost already gone by and passed ; but still the loud and importunate cry will reach thee,—that thou wilt turn back unto me, and bid me to be brought unto thee, and, by thy word, wilt open mine eyes if I have faith in thee. Anoint thou mine eyes with eye-salve, that I may see—that I may see the wonderful things of thy law ; that I may behold thy kingdom, which, wonderful to speak, is spread abroad in the world, and open unto all, and yet is a *hidden treasure*, only discerned by a few : that I

may receive thy kingdom within me,—the light of thy presence, and the knowledge of thy mysteries. For what are thy miracles, but manifestations of thyself and of thy presence, on the way that leadeth to the heavenly city? And what are those evangelical commandments, but the stones that pave the road, and to miss of which is to fail of the way? Nay, rather, what are they but those precious stones and jewels, that pave the streets of the new Jerusalem, which has come down to be with men? Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold the beauty thereof, and that thy words may be to me more precious than gold and silver, being weighed in the scales of thy sanctuary.

The holy Gospels are no less than the life of God upon earth, and written by his Spirit! Oh, who can fathom the depth of his words! What mortal shall measure the height, and breadth, and length of this temple, in which the living God dwelleth! For even as a living temple is this his Gospel, wherein the Almighty is himself present; wherein his death and cross is as the altar, and his birth the fountain, that goeth forth to all the world. O marvellous mirror of infinite love! who will not hope for pardon when he gazeth on thee! O marvellous mirror of infinite holiness! who will not tremble lest he fall short when he beholdeth himself in thee! To study the Gospels is to gaze on Almighty God, and to behold oneself in the brightness of his presence. Oh, who will not wish to hide himself, when seen in that presence, in which the heavens are not clean, and the angels hide their faces in fear! For God is himself, in some sense, in his Gospels, and therefore they are, *in some sense, the kingdom of heaven; and to be in them, in contemplation and in prayer, is, in some*

sense, to be in heaven : for that is heaven, where he is revealed. For heaven is not so much a local habitation as that place wherein God is discovered. But as heaven would be no heaven to those who have not the temper of those blissful inhabitants, but rather a place of banishment from their own pleasures of sense : so this Gospel is no Gospel, this heaven is no heaven, to those who are not of the temper and disposition required therein. It is love and obedience that maketh heaven to be heaven, and perfect union with God in those his creatures who have no will but his will ; who have no delight but in submission to his pleasure ; no love for created things independent of God, but love and rejoice over those penitents and humble ones over whom Christ rejoices, and whom he loves. To those, therefore, who have this love of God, the Gospel itself will be a kingdom of heaven ; where Christ is heard, and Christ is seen, and his power is manifested, and his will is declared, and his creatures are before him. This is as a heaven upon earth, within whose hallowed precincts the vanities of this world enter not ; from which we may look forth and behold the things of earth as angels behold them ; nay, see them in the light in which they behold them who are now with Christ—those whom they can influence and charm no more. Here, in these living oracles of God we know who are truly blessed, and on whom woe abideth : here we learn by what means to approach him, and what tempers he draws near unto himself : here we are taught to realize the things unseen around us, and to behold angels ministering.

Oh let earthly joy and sorrow depart, that I may learn the joy and the sorrow of Christ ! for even He also had joy on earth, because God hath

made known his kingdom to the humble in heart. For what sympathy with Lazarus can he have who liveth like Dives ? and how can he understand the narrow way who is looking about how he may rise in the world ? Far away be the disputers of this world, that I may hear Christ speaking unto me ! Far away be the stir of controversy, and the novelities of the latter and evil days, that I may enter into that ancient temple, where the echo of Christ's voice is still heard amid his silent and reverend worshippers of old ; nay, there his voice itself is still new and fresh in his Gospels. "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him." Well may we say, Let all things else be silent, that we may hear Christ speaking to us ! Hushed be the sounds of earth, the noise of things passing by, that are fleeting on to decay and ruin, that we may listen to that "word of God" that "abideth for ever." Hushed be the sounds, not of strife only, the wranglings of the market and exchange, and the councils of nations ; but hushed be the sound of human affections, of human thought, and of all things fleeting, and of all things that cannot pass the barrier which divides us from things unseen ; that we may be able to hear His words who hath said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." "Let all the earth keep silence before Him." Hushed be the steps of hurrying waters, that speak of fleetness ; and silent the sea, whose sound is of restlessness, and of change, and of motion ; and silent the winds, that speak of mutability and change ; hushed be the earth and the heavens, that are passing away, and the voice of hurrying days *and of years* ; that we may hear God speaking unto *us—speaking unto us as man unto man, as brother*

unto brother, in his Gospels. "The time is short : it remaineth, that they that weep be as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." (1 Cor. vii. 30.) The sun of life is going down, and the year is on the wane; and the busy sounds of day are declining; and even now the silent stars begin to appear, like the lights of immortality. Let prophets and apostles speak no more; no more the obscure sign and the dead ordinance, the oracle on the breast, and the smoking sacrifice! Christ himself, in these his living oracles, is speaking unto us! Let his creatures be set aside, that we may hear our Creator—may hear his voice and see his face! The Maker of the world, he that "layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him;" (Zech. xii. 1;) He that knoweth every movement of the heart, is flesh and blood; nay,—wonderful and unspeakable the mystery,—he is of my flesh and blood; even "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;" (Gen. ii. 23;) for my life hath been taken from his side. His body is one with my body, which hath partaken of him; yea, therefore his resurrection is my resurrection, and the transfiguration of his flesh is the transfiguration of mine also: for he "shall change our vile body that it may be like unto his glorious body;" and even now, with these eyes of the flesh, is it given us to gaze on him in the flesh, and even to be converted into the same image.

"Of such a one will I glory," (2 Cor. xii. 5,) for he is the new creature in Christ; "but of myself I will not glory;" for, oh! what abasement is sufficient for these things! How can he feel sufficiently his own vileness and nothingness, who has thus to stand before God—to stand before him in filthy

garments, with Satan at his right hand ! (Zech. iii. 1.) If the holy prophet exclaimed, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips ; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts !" (Isaiah vi. 5 ;) what, therefore, should we say, who are admitted into that temple wherein we hear, not seraphims crying unto each other, but the Lord of Hosts himself speaking unto us, and behold his eye fixed upon us in his Gospel !

" Oh ! when thine earthly temple, now so fair,
 Among the things that have gone by shall be,
 And nothing but thy heavenly temple stands,
 Pity me in that day, in that day pity me !"

*Extracted from " Thoughts on the Study of the
 Holy Gospels," Second Edition, 1845.*

Tracts for Englishmen.

THE PARTING HYMN.

BY THE

REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

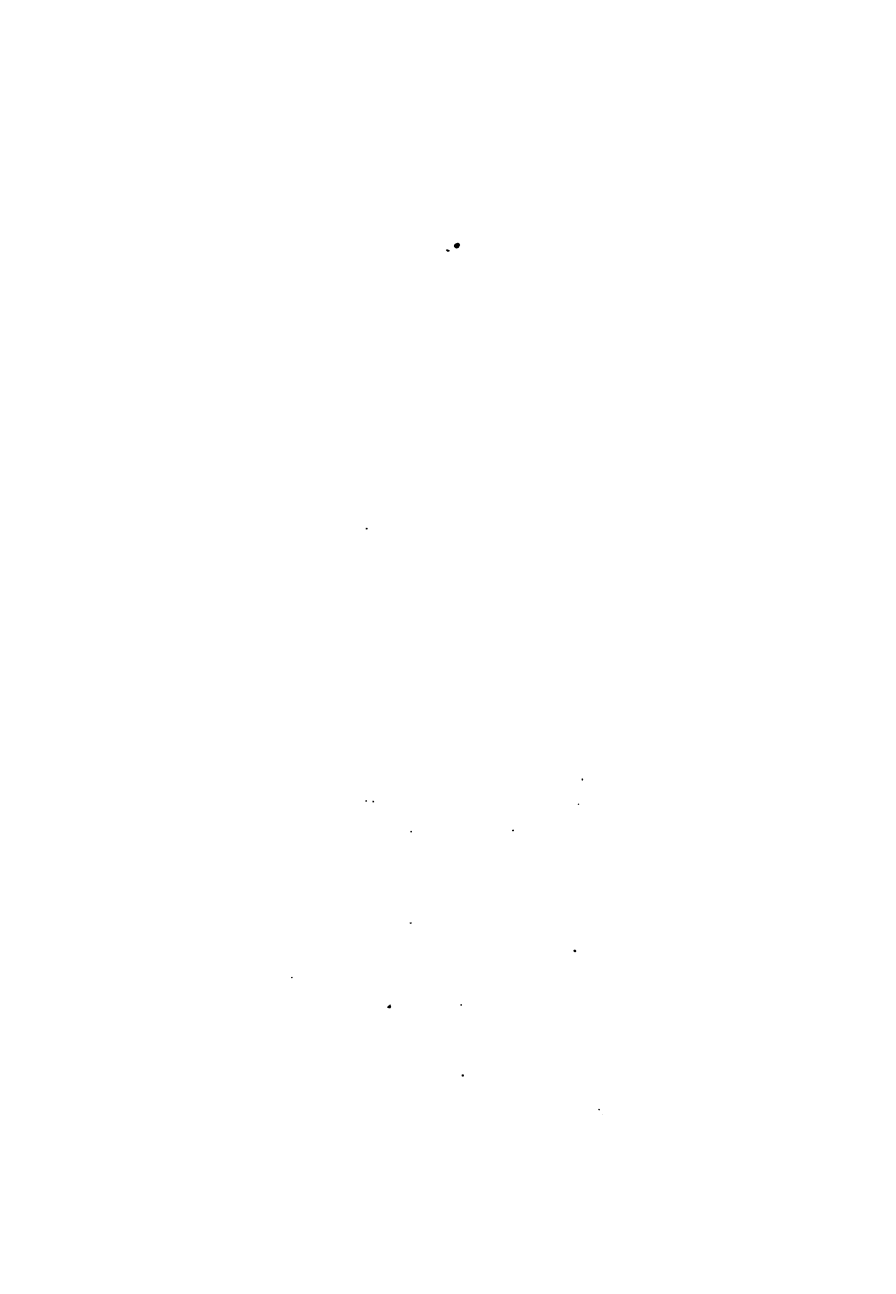
PRINCIPAL OF THE EAST INDIA COLLEGE, AND CHAPLAIN TO
THE TOWER OF LONDON.



LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.
1846.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]





The Parting Hymn.

MATTHEW xxvi. 30.

“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.”

WE are too apt to regard music as a human art, or invention, just because men make certain musical instruments, and compose certain musical pieces. And hence there are Christians who would banish music from the public worship of God; as though unsuited to, or unworthy of, so high and illustrious an employment. But it is forgotten, as has been observed by a well-known writer,* that the principles of harmony are in the elements of nature; that “the element of air was as certainly ordained to give us harmonious sounds, in due measure, as to give respiration to the lungs.” God has given us “music in the air, as He hath given us wine in the grape;” leaving it to man to draw forth the rich melody, as well as to extract the inspiring juice: but designing that both should be employed to His glory, and used in His service. Wine was eminently consecrated for religion, when chosen as the sacramental representation of the

* Jones, of Nayland.

precious blood of the Redeemer ; and a holy distinction ought never to be denied to music, whilst the Psalmist, speaking undoubtedly by the Spirit of God, exclaims, " Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs : praise Him upon the loud cymbals : praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals."

It is not, however, instrumental music which is mentioned in the text. " They sang a hymn." There is another remarkable instance, recorded in the New Testament, of God's praises having been sung at a strange time, and in a strange place. Paul and Silas, thrust into the inner prison at Philippi, and with their feet made fast in the stocks, had recourse to singing ; as though their condition had been prosperous, and their spirits elated. " And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God : and the prisoners heard them." They were not content with reminding each the other of the goodness of God ; with speaking of His greatness and loving kindness : " they sang praises unto God ;" and that, too, with so loud a voice, that the other prisoners heard them, though confined in the remotest part of the dungeon. In like manner, Christ and His apostles " sang an hymn ;" they were not satisfied with repeating an hymn : and we may certainly gather from this, that God's praises ought to be sung rather than spoken ; that singing is the more appropriate vehicle, even when circumstances may be such as to make music seem almost out of place.

It may, we think, fairly be said, that the power of singing has not been sufficiently considered as *one* of the Creator's gifts to His creatures ; and, *therefore*, intended to be used to His glory. We

recognise this fact in regard of the power of speech ; we acknowledge that God must have endowed man with the faculty of uttering articulate sounds, and have clothed his tongue with language ; and we confess that this very fact renders us responsible, in a high sense, for our words, and destroys all surprise that words are to be made a criterion at the last. A noble gift is abused whenever an idle word is spoken ; why, then, should we marvel at the assertion of our Lord, "I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."*

But singing, like music in general, has been too much given up by the church to the world : it has not been sufficiently considered and cultivated, as designed for religious ends, and helpful to religious feelings. And hence, for the most part, our psalmody is discreditable to our congregations : it is either given over to a few hired singers—as though we were to praise God by deputy—or is left with the children of the National Schools—as though, in growing older, we had less cause for thankfulness. Let me say, that the efforts which are now being systematically made throughout the country, to teach our population to sing, should be regarded with great interest and pleasure by the Christian. Such efforts have a more immediate bearing than is, perhaps, commonly thought, on the national piety. I do not mean merely that there is a humanising power in music ; and that the poor, taught to sing, are likely to be less wild,

* Matthew xii. 36, 37.

and less prone to disorder, and therefore more accessible to the ministrations of religion. Not, indeed, that I would make no account of this; for I thoroughly believe that, in improving the tastes of a people, you are doing much for their moral advancement. I like to see our cottagers encouraged to train the rose and the honeysuckle round their doors; and our weavers, as is often the fact, dividing their attention between their looms and their carnations: for the man who can take care of a flower, and who is all alive to its beauty, is far less likely than another who has no delight in such recreations, to give himself up to gross lusts and habits. But independently of this, if singing were generally taught, the psalmody in our churches could not fail to be generally improved. And I am quite sure that this could not take place without, by the blessing of God, a great spiritual benefit. When many voices join heartily in prayer, it is hardly possible to remain undevout; when many voices join heartily in praise, it is hardly possible to remain indifferent. Every one feels this. In a congregation where the responses are generally left to the clerk and the children, how difficult it is to pray! whereas, if the majority join, one is drawn in almost unconsciously, and cannot keep back his cordial Amen. Thus, also, in a congregation where few attempt to sing, how difficult is it to magnify the Lord! But who can resist the rush of many voices? Whose bosom does not swell, as old and young, rich and poor, mingle their notes of adoration and thankfulness?

You may tell me that there is not necessarily any religion in all this emotion. I know that; *and I would not have you mistake emotion for*

religion. But we are creatures so constituted as to be acted on through our senses and feelings; and whilst emotion is not religion, it will often be a great step towards it. In teaching a people to sing with the voice "the songs of Zion," we cannot but believe that, God helping, much is done towards teaching them to sing with the understanding and the heart. A faculty is developed, which God designed for His glory, but which has, comparatively, been allowed to remain almost useless. Yes, a faculty which God designed for His glory; and if so designed, it cannot be idle without injury, nor be rightly exercised without advantage. And I seem to learn from our text, that it is not enough that we praise God with speech. Christ and His apostles "sang an hymn" ere "they went out into the mount of Olives." What had music, cheerful and animated music,* to do with so sad and solemn an occasion? Nay, there is music in heaven. They who stand on the "sea of glass mingled with fire," have the "harps of God" in their hands; they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. Why then should music ever be out of place with those whose affections are above?

We wish you to draw this lesson from the last action of Christ and His apostles, before they went forth to extraordinary trial. We wish you to observe and understand, that so far from being unsuited to circumstances of trouble and danger, the song of praise should, at least, mingle with the cry of prayer; and that, if you would arm yourselves for duty, you should recount the marvellous acts of the Lord, as well as supplicate the com-

* 113th and five following Psalms.

munications of His grace. This is too much neglected and overlooked by Christians. They are more familiar with the earnest petition than with the grateful anthem. Like the captives in Babylon, they hang their harps upon the willows, when they find themselves in a strange land : whereas, if they would sing "one of the songs of Zion," it would not only remind them of home, but encourage them to ask assistance and expect deliverance. Make trial of this method, ye who have a dark path before you, and who shrink from entering into the cloud. You have offered prayer—have you also offered praise ? You have commended yourselves to God for the future—have you also commemorated His care of you through the past ? Say not, "How can I sing the Lord's song in a strange land ?" With this burden upon me, and this prospect before me, it is too much to expect me to do more than pray ; for who can sing songs with a heavy heart ? This is the very feeling against which we would warn you. There is no Christian with so great cause of sorrow, as to be without a greater of thankfulness. And the chords of the soul will never give forth so fervent a prayer, as when the Christian has been endeavouring to string them to the chorus of praise. Look at Christ and His apostles. You will not say that your circumstances can be more distressing than theirs ; that there is more, in the peculiarities of the trial, to excuse you from singing the Lord's song. Yet, before they departed—the Redeemer to His terrible agony, the disciples to the dreaded separation—the last thing which they did, was to join in the chanting of thankful psalms : it was not until "they had sung an *hymn*," but then it was, that "they went out into the mount of Olives."

Such would never, even, be out of place in the chamber of the dying believer. He has just received, through the holy mystery of the Eucharist, the body and blood of his blessed Redeemer: and now his own failing voice, and the voices of relatives and friends, join in chanting words which the church directs to be either said or sung, as the conclusion of the sacramental service: "Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty." Wonder ye, that when there was the option either to say or sing, they chose the singing at such a moment? Nay, they all felt that they had a rough hill to climb; and they remembered, that, when Christ and His apostles had finished their last supper, "they sang an hymn," and then "went out into the mount of Olives."

(Extract from "Sermons on the less Prominent Facts and References in Sacred Story." Second Edition.)

EXCELLENCE OF CHURCH MUSIC.

The Rev. William Jones, of Nayland, (above referred to) in his noble sermon on *The Nature and Excellence of Music*, writes:—"Let all the admirers of the musical art stop awhile to reflect with gratitude and devotion, that the invention of choral harmony in parts, arose from the Trinitarian worship of the Christian church. It is certain, we have no music of that form extant in the world, but such as is Christian; nor do we read of any: and had it not been for the schools of music, established and maintained by the church, I will venture to say, there had, at this day, been none of that excellent music with which all of us are now charmed, and, I hope, many of us edified. Look out of Christendom into the kingdoms of China, Tartary, Turkey, and the regions of the southern world; and you will discover no music but what is beggarly and barbarous, fit only to amuse the ears of children or savages. *Every thing that is great and excellent in this way, hath come down to us from the Christian church.* O holy and blessed society, which hath thus introduced us to all that we can know and feel of heaven itself! How shall we celebrate thee? how shall we cultivate and adorn thee, according to what we have derived from thee? Let others be cold and indifferent, if they will, to our forms of worship; but upon musicians, if they know themselves, religion hath a particular demand; for they would never have been what they are, if God, in His infinite goodness, had not brought us to the improvements of the Gospel."

Again, after complaining justly of the usual bands of *the singers* in country churches, who have not skill to distinguish what kind of melody is proper for the church, and what for the theatre, he writes this needed counsel. "If music is a gift of God to us for our good, it ought to be used as such, for the improvement of our understanding, and the advancement of devotion. Services, anthems, and psalms, should be introduced *as lessons of purity in life and manners*. "Rejoice in the Lord, *O ye righteous*," saith the Psalmist; "for it becometh well *the just* to be thankful." What! shall we praise God with our lips, while we blaspheme Him with our lives? Praise to the Lord is proper to those only who derive blessings from the Lord; it is impertinent and false when it comes from those who are never the better for Him. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;" but let not them say so, who have given themselves up to a state of captivity under sin and folly. Some there are, who are very loud and forward in singing, while they are insensible of the greatness and the value of those subjects which our music celebrates: like the *sounding brass* of a trumpet, which makes a great noise, but feels nothing. It must be our own fault, if our music does not contribute to our reformation; and we may have it to answer for, in common with the other means of improvement which we have abused."

And this good pastor concludes:—"When that heavenly scenery is described to us in the Revelation,—'I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and

as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : ' who can read these words without a desire to add his own voice to that multitude ; and to sing as a member of that kingdom in which the Lord God omnipotent reigneth ? How must the soul be filled with that immense chorus of men and angels, to which *the loudest and mightiest thunder shall add dignity without terror, and be reduced to the temper of an accompaniment !* "

God, of His infinite mercy, give us grace so to pray, and so to sing, and so to live, that we may be admitted into the celestial choir, where with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we may laud and magnify the adorable name of God ; ascribing to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all honour, glory, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

Tracts for Englishmen.

THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH.

BY THE
REV. G. W. WOODHOUSE, M.A.
VICAR OF ALBRIGHTON, SALOP.



LONDON:
EDWARDS AND HUGHES,
AVE-MARIA LANE.
1846.



[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

into the fulness of joy. Even the souls of the saints that were slain for the testimony of the truth, are represented as under the altar, waiting for their perfect consummation and bliss.—(Rev. vi. 9.)

At the return of Christ, however, when the end is come, then the dead in Christ will rise first; and those which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. Then will death and hell be destroyed. Then will the graves give up their dead. Then will the gracious voice be heard, saying, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” It is not until Christ who is our life shall appear, that those who are His shall appear with Him in glory.—(Col. iii. 4.)

Then will be fulfilled, in their highest sense, the glowing words of the prophet, “The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion: and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”—(Isa. li. 11.) Then thy brother, thy friend, thy child, thy husband, shall rise again. Then every thing that offends shall be removed from the church. Every murmur will be hushed, and no sigh will be heard: joy will dwell in every heart, and praises will proceed from every tongue. The time of *fear and trouble* will be past. The trials of the

wilderness will be remembered no more, for joy of the inheritance of heaven. Freedom from every ill, and the possession of every good, these will be found the portion of God's people. For the sake of the faithful departed, then, we may well say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Their crown of righteousness is sure: their names are written in heaven: the glories of eternity are their inheritance, and upon this they will enter in the day of the revelation of Christ.

But if the church should long for the return of her Lord, in love to her children who have departed this life in His faith and fear, should she not equally be anxious for His coming in respect of those who are still "militant here on earth?" If the condition of saints resting from their labours will be infinitely improved at the coming of Christ, how much more will it be so with those who are wrestling still, in this world of trial, in sore strife with the enemies of their peace! The departed are set free from temptation, from sorrow, from fear, from suffering. But these are the trials with which they, whose warfare is still going on, have continually to contend. What joy then, to such as are thus surrounded with difficulties and dangers, to reach the promised land! What joy for the poor child of sorrow, suffering from affliction or from fear of any kind, to know that he is safe, and to find a place prepared for him in the many mansions of his Father's house! Unless

the dangers of the voyage be preferred to the joys of home: unless a land of strangers be better than the society of loving friends: unless the strife of battle be better than the spoils of victory; and the continued conflict with sin better than the calm unbroken tranquillity of soul, which awaits the just;—surely there is no reason for any true Christian to desire that the present system of things should remain unchanged.

No doubt, those who are not strictly religious will form a very different opinion. The careless cannot possibly desire the coming of Christ. They who love the world cannot love the thought of the coming of Christ. To these His coming will be the signal of unavailing remorse. Their idols will be broken; their hopes will perish; their treasures will have come to an end; *their all* will be gone! The remembrance of their misspent lives; their neglect of the one thing needful; their rejection of the mercies of God; their proud, unhumbled spirit; all these things will come into their minds when the sign of the Son of man shall be seen. *Now* the wicked may laugh at the warnings of truth: he may despise the threatenings of evil; he may silence the accusations of conscience; he may eat, drink, and be merry, in spite of his awful condition: but it will be a widely different thing when the end shall come. He will see more clearly, and feel *more reasonably*, when God shall arise to judge *the world*.

This, then, is the alternative before every one of us. The question is, shall we have reason to rejoice with God's people at the coming of Christ, or shall we be overwhelmed with fear with the wicked, when we see Him as we all shall do, as plainly as we now see one another?

Surely, after all that He has done for us, He might well expect that we should all be anxiously waiting for the hour of His coming. He is our *Saviour*; and ought we not to long to see Him? He has prepared for us a kingdom; and ought not the mention of his coming to take us to himself, to rejoice our hearts? He will restore to us the friends we have lost; and should not this make us say, "When wilt thou come unto me?" He will remove from us every evil, and crown us with loving kindness and tender mercies: He will frame for us bodies of glory like his own: He will make us equal to the angels, and bring us to glory: and should we not be listening to catch the first sound of His chariot wheels? Should we not be watching and looking for his coming, as the watchman waits to see the first faint streaks of the morning? Oh! shame to the children of men, if they are not ready to say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Shame to each one of us, if the knowledge of our Saviour's love has not so warmed our hearts, as to make us rejoice in the expectation of beholding and blessing our Benefactor!

Oh! if we desire not the great change which is to

accompany the manifestation of Christ, let us see what was the principle of conduct adopted by the Psalmist, and spoken of in connection with his earnest desire for the coming of his Lord. "I will walk in my house," is his principle, "with a perfect heart; I will take no wicked thing in hand; I hate the sins of unfaithfulness: there shall no such cleave unto me." Let us only adopt this principle, and we shall not fail of possessing the same confidence of good, which the words of the Psalmist show he had in desiring the presence of his Lord. He says, "I will walk in my house with a perfect heart." And what has he to fear who is acting thus? "I will take no wicked thing in hand;" and what may not he hope for, who proceeds on this principle? Those who act upon such holy resolutions as these have nothing to fear, but every thing to hope for, at the coming of Christ. They may well look forward with longing anxiety to the time of its coming to pass. The great matter, then, is that we should adopt and act up to the high principle contained in the words of the text. We should resolve with all steadfastness of purpose and sincerity of intention, that we "will take no wicked thing in hand: that no sin of unfaithfulness shall cleave unto us: that we will walk in our house with a perfect heart." Only let us do this, and we shall have no difficulty in saying, "Come, Lord Jesus:" we shall be guilty of no insincerity on praying, "*Shortly* accomplish the number of thine elect,

and hasten thy kingdom." We shall be able to comprehend, with all saints, the joy and peace to be found in believing; their tranquillity and repose in the prospect of eternity. In no other way can we ever hope for this, except by acting upon their principles. So long as we love the world, and the things of the world: so long as we walk in the ways of carelessness and sin, and take this or that wicked thing in hand: if we say that we wish for the coming of Christ, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. For to what purpose can we desire the coming of the day of God, if it will be to us a day of darkness, and not of light: a day of fear and shame, and not of joy and peace? Oh! in vain we seem to celebrate the love of Christ, in vain we adopt a certain semblance of religion, if we do not resolve to walk in our house with a perfect heart. Oh! let us not be content with our state of mind, so long as we are afraid to take upon our lips the words, "Make no long tarrying, O my God;" so long as we should be distressed to find our petition answered, when we say, "Thy kingdom come!"

Walk in your house, my brethren, with a perfect heart; take in hand no work of wickedness; give yourselves up to the service and worship of Almighty God, and separate yourselves in thought and action from men of the world, and be it yours to walk humbly in the way of pure and undefiled religion. Live as those who have been redeemed

from sin, and death, and hell, by the love of an Almighty Saviour. Live as those who have *no wish* for any continuing city here; as those who know that they are in this world but strangers and pilgrims, journeying towards the land of which the Lord hath said, "This is the kingdom I have prepared for you." At times everything may seem dark around you, and your hearts may feel heavy and disquieted within you. Yet let not your heart be troubled. Only believe in Christ. Live for the future world. Disengage yourselves more entirely from this. Love retirement. Give yourselves to meditation. Be more and more constant in prayer. Come more continually to God's holy house. Abide here in peace as at the gate of heaven. Draw nigh to meet your gracious Saviour at the Holy Communion. Let religion absorb more and more of your time, your thoughts, and your hearts. Think how blessed beyond all expression is the hope given you. Realize to your minds your arising from the grave. Dwell upon the thought of meeting the Lord in the air. Contemplate the joy of being re-united to your friends. Behold the glory of the inheritance of the saints. Remember your life is hid with Christ in God, and that the end will soon be here. Everything is waiting for the day of the resurrection. Faith and hope are on the watch for its coming. Affection finds comfort in the expectation of it, and devotion *is quickened* by the thought of its approach. The

church, God's witness upon earth, is continually holding forth the truth, and soothing the minds of men by its calm and steady testimony to eternal things. A brother dies; and his dead body, as it approaches its appointed rest, is met by the minister of God with the gracious declaration, "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord." His remains are committed to the earth in the sure and certain hope of the promised resurrection to eternal life. The very house of prayer in which we meet is surrounded on all sides by departed friends. Again and again we bless the name of God for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear. And while we ask for grace to follow their good example, the example of those who walked in their houses with a perfect heart, we anticipate the happy time, when we, with them, shall be made partakers of His heavenly kingdom, when the end shall have come, and Christ shall appear in glory!

(Extracted from "Parochial Sermons.")

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BY THE

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RECTOR OF PETERSTOW.



(121)

LONDON:

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1846.

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The Communion of Saints.

CHURCH CATECHISM.

“ I believe in the communion of saints.”

IN common language, we give the name of saints to those holy persons only, who were the most eminent members of the church in ancient times; whose faith and righteousness were especially approved by God, and signally manifested among his people. Such were the immediate companions and followers of our Lord: the apostles, the evangelists, the early martyrs, and their successors in the first ages of Christianity. And this restriction of the word is most proper, since these blessed persons fully merit this mark of pre-eminence: and it is necessary to be extremely cautious in appropriating to any human beings a name so very sacred. But although, in speaking of individuals, we make this reverent distinction, yet we must remember that in Holy Scripture all members

of the church are called **saints**. We are all called to be saints. (Rom. i. 7.) To be holy is the end of our profession; it is the command of God; and we believe that all those who live and die in the faith and fear of God are saints.

The communion of saints, then, means the perfect and loving companionship existing between all true members of the christian church throughout the world; which makes them agree in faith, in hope, in love, in thoughts, in desires, in worship; and which arises from that unity of spiritual nature derived from Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

This agreement can only be within the church. In order to be loving brethren, we must submit to the rules of our Father's household; the outward order of which has been prescribed, that the inward blessings of love and peace may be communicated to each member, and that spiritual health may reign throughout the entire body.

This communion consists, first, in the unity of nature possessed by all Christians; since they are each of the same spiritual kindred, children of God, and brethren of the same household; and in the life to come, all good persons, of all times, shall be thus united.

It consists, in the next place, in the sameness of *object and design* in all. All alike seek the

kingdom of heaven, for themselves and for others; and to this end all their spiritual faculties are directed.

There is also an agreement and concord among them, in the means by which the kingdom of heaven is sought and attained. They agree in faith; since they all believe alike, in God the Father, who created them; in God the Son, who has redeemed them; and in God the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies them; in the forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life, purchased for them by our Saviour's blood. And they not only agree in holding these things, but they earnestly desire that all their brethren may hold them, heartily and steadfastly, to the saving of their souls. So that, throughout the whole world, at all times, the church holds, and rejoices in maintaining and propagating, one common and invariable belief.

There is also an agreement in the hope which is set before them. They look for salvation, through Christ Jesus, with a confidence which is greater than all human hope; since the hope of a Christian is a sincere conviction that the prayers of the penitent will be heard, and that eternal life will be given to them who believe. And this hope every Christian entertains, as well for himself, as for all his brethren.

But, above all this, there is an agreement in charity, or love. In this the communion of saints is chiefly manifested; for love is the very bond of peace and of all virtues. It is that heavenly influence by which the body of Christ is edified. It comprehends the whole of the divine law: since the first and great commandment is, to love God with all our hearts; and the second is, to love our neighbour, that is, all mankind, as ourselves. Therefore is love the fulfilling of the law.

And if this love were perfect in the church, then would the communion of all saints on earth be complete; for then obedience would be perfect also; then faith would be steadfast, hope would be earnest: then there would be the greatest anxiety to fulfil all God's commands; and then all the members would stand fast with one spirit, walking by the same rule, joined together in the same mind, glorifying God with one mind and one mouth. Then would each desire and hope that the salvation of his fellow-creatures might be forwarded, as well as his own. If one member suffered, he would also suffer: he would rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, as his heavenly Master did. When a *brother* had repented, he would rejoice with the *angels*, and with his blessed Lord in heaven:

then would his thoughts and desires be with those who sleep in Christ, with the spirits in heaven, with the whole church universal; and with Him, who ever lives to make intercession for all.

Thus there is a communion between Christians, whether present with, or absent from, one another. They have a common language, taught them by the gospel of their Lord: prayers in common, whereby they feel that, while praying for themselves and for one another, they are worshipping together in the same spiritual company, and in the same Divine presence. Through the same ordinances they are partakers of the same grace; and their common desire is, that they may be all one, even as the Father and the Son are one. (John xvii. 21.)

Death itself does not disturb this communion. Of the state of those who have departed in faith from among men, we know no more than this: that they are at rest, and in God's safe keeping; free from all unhappiness and pain. But we do know, that, during the short separation made by death between the body and the soul, the spirits who are thus removed from us are with Christ (Phil. i. 23); and maintain that same holy union with their heavenly Father, which enables those

who are yet in the body to pray to him, and give him thanks. And between them and us there is this fellowship and sympathy : not only that we all trust in the same redemption, but that, as we rejoice in their present rest and their future glory, so shall they hereafter rejoice in the salvation of those who survived them upon earth.

And not only is there a communion between all Christians who are, or have been, in the world ; but also between them and all the faithful who died before Christ's coming ; the patriarchs, the prophets, and the good men of ancient times. All these now rest in hope : for them the christian church rejoices ; since with them she shall be saved hereafter, through the mercies of our Lord, (Matt. viii. 11.)

A communion also subsists between the church now on earth and the company in heaven. The angels, as our blessed Lord tells us, rejoice when men are saved. (Luke xv. 10.) And in the steadfastness of those blessed spirits, who kept their first estate, when the disobedient angels fell, the church on earth rejoices. Thus there is a community of affection between the church visible *and invisible*. There is also a community of *employment*. In heaven, the praise of God is the

continual occupation of the blessed spirits; on earth it is the chief pleasure, and, if it were in their power, would be the chief occupation, of the good. And the crowning blessing which the inhabitants both of earth and heaven enjoy, the one imperfectly and invisibly, the other visibly and eternally, is the presence of God.

All these, the living and the dead, the heavenly and the earthly church, maintain their holy agreement, through the imparted grace of God. And since those who receive his grace are participators of his nature, therefore those who have christian fellowship one with another (1 John i. 3) have also fellowship with God the Father.

To maintain this perfect communion is the highest blessing promised by the Gospel of our Lord; to enjoy it perfectly is to be in heaven; to promote it on earth is to make this world resemble heaven. Where there is love and concord, there is Christ in the midst of us; and where Christ is, there must be every blessing: since the followers of Christ are his companions, his friends, his brethren; the heirs with him of his Father's inheritance; those to whom God hath freely given all things. (Rom. viii. 32.)

But when shall this communion be perfect upon earth? For now, so divided and distracted

is the christian church, that we have urgent need indeed to pray to God, as for an unaccomplished blessing, that his kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. For, however desirous the true servants of God may be for the universal prevalence of this heavenly concord, yet they must hourly acknowledge, that the channels of its diffusion are impeded by the weakness and wickedness of man. The church is at variance with itself, one member with another; and nation rises against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, not only in a temporal, but also in a spiritual, warfare: and christian men act as if there were many bodies of Christ; when, in fact, by their own wickedness, that one body is torn and rent asunder!

Now the real and sound portions of Christ's church are those, who have always believed and maintained all doctrines and holy practices which the Scriptures teach; and which, being in accordance with Scripture, or not contradictory to it, are known, from history and sure testimony, to have been held by the apostles and their successors; and have been held by the great body of the faithful, in all places and in all ages.

And such a branch is that to which we belong; *the church of England and Ireland.* This church

holds the pure doctrine of Christ. She believes in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. She receives his sacraments, his grace, his benefits, both present and to come. She has bishops, priests, and deacons. She acknowledges the entire of Holy Scripture, and teaches the same to all her members. She holds the doctrine which was held by the apostles, and which the testimony of those ages which were nearest the apostolic times assures us are true. She rejects all doctrine opposed to Scripture, all things that are the mere superstitious inventions of men; and professes nothing, as essential to salvation, except that which has been taught her from above.

Hereafter the church shall be, in its fullest and real sense, triumphant: for then the angels and all faithful Christians shall form one company, triumphing for ever over the destruction of death and sin. And not only they, but also, as we said before, all the holy men of the remotest times (Luke xiii. 28), who, before the coming of Christ, have served God, and who shall be redeemed by his blood, shed as well for them, as for those who, in after ages, were baptized in his name; these all shall form, hereafter, the church of God in heaven. Then, every corrupt

branch being cut off, and every perfect one having attained its full maturity, the church of God, the body of Christ, the vine of his planting, the temple of his Holy Spirit, shall be complete, and God shall dwell in the midst of it: the Lord shall be their everlasting life, and their God their glory.

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The Humble Christian.

PSALM XV. 1.

"Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle; or who shall rest upon thy holy hill?"

"The smoke ascends
To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth,
As from the haughtiest palace."

WORDSWORTH.

CHARLES HARLEY is a remarkable man in humble life; and while it is unnecessary to give a description of his parentage and birthplace, let us see what are the circumstances of worthier record, and without one word of exaggeration, set down only that which is true and known of his excellent career.

From his early years, Charles was blessed with a good resolution of mind. Before he went to service he could read but a little; and on leaving one of his places, (through no misconduct,) and thus having a little leisure time on his hands, he determined to *place himself at school*, in order that he might read with greater ease to himself. Soon being required in service again, he could not, at this time, pursue his education to his satisfaction. However, another opportunity occurred; and young Charles, anxious to possess the means of acquiring information, soon *put himself to school again*; actually having saved money which enabled him to enter as a lodger in the house of a respectable schoolmaster. From that time he became a good scholar, could read and write with perfect ease, and went far into arithmetic. What a fine example of self-cultivation is this! While other boys were growing up in ignorance and sin, and while the enlightened of the world were lamenting the

gross darkness of the people, there was light in Charles's dwelling; and long before the age of Penny Magazines and Infant Schools, and universal educational exertion, his own desire of improvement made him independent of the aid of others; and a book was ever a delight to him during his evening hours.

And we shall find this self-resolution to be the remarkable feature in Charles's mind all through his life. For the same principle that led him to seek a good education with ardour, also led him to constant attendance on the services of his holy religion. Charles Harley has ever been a churchman in that true spirit of devotion and honesty which the very name suggests; and the effectual fervent prayers which he has, we may believe, offered in the sanctuary of God, have been answered in the fruit of his daily life. And yet, perhaps, Charles loves the Church mainly for the pious and fervent spirit which is so plainly apparent in all her offices and prayers.

He may not be able to enter into the reasons of her universal Christian verities; but still he is a devoted disciple of the Temple of Peace, because he is humble-minded, and free from any approach to conceit and self-righteousness; and thus he finds a response to his pious feelings in the humility and calm edification of the Church: of that Church, whose saving confession is, *Thou art the King of Glory, O CHRIST*: and, in her solemn liturgy, prays for mercy upon all men!

Again: Charles Harley is free from all shadow of reproach in regard to his moral conduct. I have spoken with persons in his parish who have known him personally for thirty years, and by good report still longer, and not one can utter

any word of accusation against him; but, on the contrary, all are speaking in his praise. A respectable farmer said to me, "Charles Harley has kept all the commandments, if ever any man has; and it has never entered into his heart to steal, or to slander his neighbour." Another said, "Charles has always been a hard-working man, and the first to the woods in the morning, with his axe over his shoulder. He never would frequent any public-house, and was never given to drinking." Another states, that "Charles is a true attendant at the Church, and no person can lay any misconduct to his charge, for he is 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.'" And the writer of this sketch can readily bear testimony, that, in addition to moral worth and integrity, poor Charles is a truly humble suppliant at the throne of grace, and binds about his heart that most important declaration of the Saviour, "Without me, ye can do nothing;" and the confession of the Saviour's follower, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." Charles's is an inside religion; a sanctified heart, and not a silvered tongue: he has learned how the Church puts prominently forward the doctrine of daily renewal, and prays that all her children, "being regenerate, and made God's children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

It may be remarked here, that Charles's extreme temperance in regard to drinking, gives another proof of his independence of the aid of others in preventing him from becoming a victim to the more than beastly vice of drunkenness, with all *its horrid train* of certain bodily disease. In the

* Collect for Christmas Day. Confirmation Service.

days that Charles has lived there were no temperance and teetotal societies, so that abstinence from intoxicating drink was not become even a transitory fashion; but he simply abided by that grand society of total abstinence from all evil, called THE CHURCH OF CHRIST; and then, not one kind of intemperance only, and not one sin only, but all kinds of iniquity that are opposite to God's holy word, were at once abstained from, on the simple principle of being a humble and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, who left us an example, that we should follow his steps, (1 Pet. ii. 21,) and, as our Church prays, be walking in holiness and righteousness all our days!

Soon after poor Charles had attracted my attention, it pleased God to afflict him with one of the most painful disorders to which the human body can be subjected; and then it was that he appeared as a Christian hero indeed. There was every likelihood of his approaching death; and under this expectation he was resigned perfectly to God's will. I cannot here detail, nor should I wish to do so, the many pious and spiritual exclamations that escaped from his lips, and with what earnestness he prayed to God: suffice it to say, that he gave complete evidence, as far as man can judge, that "in life or in death he was the Lord's." (Rom. xiv. 8.) I will only mention—and with reluctance it is spoken—that after reading the 86th Psalm to him, and endeavouring to point out how David, in deep affliction, called upon God, he told me that he tried to pray in the very spirit of that psalm; and when I took occasion to ask him reverently if "he feared to die," his answer was, "I do not, Sir; for those who pray to the Lord, and put all their trust in him, have no need to be

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afraid;" and his continual cry, in the painful hours of his disorder, was, "Praise the Lord, O praise the Lord!"

His expressions at this time were most devout and satisfactory; and, poor fellow! although the pain was very greatly increased by the effort, he would get up in his bed, on his knees, to receive the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Nothing, during this period, could exceed the attention of the parishioners to poor Charles; and I never stirred out, or entered any house, without anxious inquiry being made after him, in the full belief of the certainty of his approaching death; and this always was coupled with expressions relating to his preparedness to depart hence for the paradise of the Church, in heaven. With sure and certain hope of the resurrection, he could well have used the beautiful words of the Christian poet*—

"Let me not mourn that stern decay
Is busy with this shed of clay,
And wither'd leaves from off me fall;
I shall put on a fairer day
Beyond my wintry funeral."

At length, to the surprise of all, Charles was raised, by a gracious Providence, from his bed of extreme pain, and in course of time became as hearty as he had ever been during any period of his old age. He is at this time a constant attendant in his well-known seat in the church; and as often as the sacred bell summons on the Lord's day and other holy-days, Charles is sure to be present, fulfilling David's words in person, "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord:" and again, "I will declare

* Rev. Isaac Williams, B.D., Oxford.

the name of the Lord in Sion, and his worship at Jerusalem." As our Lord daily taught in the Established Church of Jerusalem, so would poor Charles be in almost daily prayer in the Established Church of favoured England, that house of prayer for all people. (Isaiah lvi. 7; Mark xi. 17.) Charles well knows that the Almighty has consecrated to Himself peculiar places on the earth, even to set His name there,* and has promised to be attentive to prayers offered from those consecrated places; and therefore Charles seeks those places which the Church has handed down as sacred in the eyes of the Almighty One, whose ears are open to our prayers. God is everywhere; heaven and earth cannot contain him; and He will always hear the sincere and secret prayer, come from where it will; but, in like manner as He hears the prayers of all, and yet in a peculiar manner blesses the prayer of the righteous man, so does He, in a peculiar manner, as we learn from His holy word, bless the prayers offered up from the consecrated ground of his apostolic church. The pious Bishop Wilson saith truly, "What the temple of Jerusalem was to that nation, the same

* Let the following texts from Scripture be reverently perused:—Gen. xxviii. 17; Exod. xv. 17, xix. 12, xx. 24; Deut. xii. 5, 6, 7, xxxi. 11; Josh. ix. 27; 1 Kings viii., from verse 29 to the end, ix., xii. 33; 1 Chron. xxix. 16, 19; 2 Chron. vi. 7, 8, 20, &c., vii. 11, 12; xx. 9; Nehem. v. 19; Prov. ix. 1; Isaiah xviii. 7, xxxiii. 17, 20, lvi. 7, lx. 13; Jer. vii. 10, 11; Ezra vi. 12; Dan. ii. 5; Zech. iii. 9; Mal. iii. 1; Psalms xxvi. 8, xxvii. 4, lxiii. 2, lxviii. 24, lxxvii. 13, lxxviii. 69, lxxxiv. 1, 2, 10, xciii. 5, c. 4, 5, cxvi. 13, 16, cxxxii. 7, cxxxiv. 3, &c.; Matt. xiii. 54; Mark xi. 17, xvi. 2; Luke ii. 46, iv. 16, xiii. 10, xix. 4, 7; John xviii. 20; Acts ii. 46, ix. 20, xiii. 14, 16, xv. 21, xvii. 2, 10, 11, 17, xviii. 8, 19; 1 Cor. ix. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 4, &c.

is every parish church to us Christians; and it has a right to all the same gracious promises which God did make to the temple of Solomon." *

Thus Charles Harley, like the holy ones of old, even resembling aged Simeon and Anna, (Luke ii. 27, 37,) is a faithful watcher in God's house: not so much on account of any sermons he may hear, (for he is a ripe Christian,) but mainly for the sake of holy and united prayer, in a pure language, (Zephaniah iii. 9,) and for the hearing of God's word, which is often lamentably absent from sermons; because, while it is freely quoted, it may, without great judgment, be wrongly applied. He seems to feel, that whatever may rage or be given to change without, all within the temple is truth—all is simplicity—all is honesty, humbleness, and charity. Charles is intent on reaching that "rest which remaineth for the people of God," (Heb. iv. 9;) he is looking forward to a share in that heavenly place, where all is contentment and praise; and therefore he has no wish or desire to "fall out by the way," (Gen. xlv. 24,) but rather, "in going through the vale of misery, would use it for a well," (Psalm lxxxiv.,) and do all he can to soften the afflictions of others, as well as in patience possess his own soul. Such a Christian could never raise the tongue of vanity or disputation against that holy and venerable Church, which in all her sacred offices of purity and love, is far above the reach of the most sainted of us all.†

Poor Charles is both meek and gentle, and

* Sermon 91. Bishop Wilson's 'Sacra Privata' was ever liked by poor Charles. It is indeed a Christian's book.

† It was a saying of Henry Kirke White—"It is a sign that a man's heart is not right with God, when he finds fault with the liturgy."—Vol. I. p. 262.

therefore is he guided in judgment, (Psalm xxv. 8,) and learned (more than scholars may be) in the way of God. In him hath the prophecy of gospel days, by Isaiah, been visibly fulfilled, which says, "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." (Is. xxix. 19.) This leads me to mention one more trait of sacred obedience in his character. Charles loves to be present on those days on which the Church, in order to show her children that it is better to follow one Noah in righteousness than a whole world drowned in sin and wickedness, holds up that light of the heavenly saints which will shine for ever and ever, when the candle of the wicked shall be put out. (Job xviii. 6.) Charles may not be able here, also, to trace the worthy origin and antiquity of this sacred custom, but he will know that the saint above all saints is JESUS CHRIST, and that all the holy saints put together have but touched the hem of his garment: yet, he who despises an earthly saint will surely never have honoured Christ, because he who despises a lesser degree of anything must confessedly despise the larger. If a man love the Lord Jesus, he will love the genuine light of the Lord, wherever it may be seen, and thus will love the least of the saints, as showing forth even a spark of the radiance of the Saint of saints.

And is it not a high privilege to steal away from the cares and business of life, and from the boisterous ones of the world, to hear of those who have already chaunted forth, in triumphal strain, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Surely we all ought to observe the saints' days in the calendar of the Church with peculiar veneration; and if but a small band be

mustered, "it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord, to save by many or by few," (1 Sam. xiv. 6;) and why should the united prayers of two or three have no value in our eyes, when the Lord himself has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them?" (Matt. xviii. 20.) And when others are wearying themselves in the work and the vanity of the world, does not the Lord himself again say to the faithful of his Church, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom?" (Luke xii. 32.) And see how few those were, who were in waiting for our Lord's first coming.

Such is the very brief history of humble and honest Charles Harley; a good man, and one ever attentive to the welfare of his own immortal soul. There is a sweet tract, entitled "The Life of William Kelly; or, the Happy Christian," written by the late Rev. Hugh Stowell, of Ballaugh, in the Isle of Man, (a tract that is known in most parishes in England,) and it strikes me that Charles is somewhat of a kindred spirit with that pious and self-abasing man. Kelly was a sincere Christian, and a sound member of Christ's Church. We read of this humble saint—"The delight which he took in the Church Service was very remarkable. To *him* the Liturgy was always new, always interesting: he joined in every petition with unabating fervour; and his earnest manner of making the responses, and his hearty zeal in singing the praises of God, had a remarkable effect on the whole congregation." And again:—"It was *not* in the house of prayer alone, that the power of *Divine* grace shone forth in the piety of our brother; *but it appeared* at all times, and in all places.

When silent, his very looks proclaimed the devout exercises of his mind; and when he spoke, his tongue declared that his heart was fixed 'on things above.' In this marked religious deportment, there was not the least affectation of sanctity; but heart, and tongue, and life, conspired to testify that all was genuine and sincere." And yet this was the man, (unlike Charles in this respect,) who was once the companion of the dissolute and the idle, and distinguished for his clamour and noise at the public-house. Surely this was one of those of whom the Apostle speaks, "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." (Eph. v. 8.)

Dear reader! whoever you may be, do not despise the accounts of these poor and pious men, but rather honour them as they are honoured of Christ. If you are a clergyman, you will at once recollect Bishop Bull's words, "We minister to souls. Souls! methinks in that one word there is a sermon. Immortal souls! precious souls! one whereof is more than worth all the world besides — *the price of the blood of the Son of God*," and you will love these humble men. Oh, they have done no one any harm, but, on the contrary, may have been of much service to many. If all men were like to them, we should not see the vice and religious hypocrisy that is in the world. If all men were like to them, the whole world would be one society of friends: and schism and dissension would reign no more. If all men were like to them, we should see the latter part of that awful text universally fulfilled—"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.) If all men were like to them, we should

see CHRIST CRUCIFIED to be the hope of eternal life, and the grand motive to all spiritual obedience: we should behold the sacred places of the Church of Christ filled with devout worshippers, "speaking the same thing with one mouth and one mind," (1 Cor. i. 10; Rom. xv. 6;) we should see the daily renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit, earnestly sought for within the walls of the Church: and we should see all men acknowledging God the Father as One who is "about their path, and about their bed, and knoweth every word of the tongue," (Psalm cxxxix. 3,) and to whom "every one of them must give account." (Rom. xiv. 12.) Oh, rather than speak one word against these good and honest men, or despise their simple and sincere habits of cheerful devotion, do you yourself look inwardly—examine "your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love which ye have to all the saints," (Col. i. 4,) and turning, with your face to the wall, as Hezekiah did, pray, "Dispose me, O heavenly Father, so to obey the precepts, that I may inherit the promises, of the Gospel. Bless me, O Lord, with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Bless me, in forgiving my iniquities; and bless me, in turning me, by the aid of thy Holy Spirit, from all iniquity. Oh let the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, cleanse me from all sin: and purge my conscience from dead works, to serve Thee, the living God."*

"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." (2 Thess. iii. 16.)

* Hill's Devotions.

Tracts for Englishmen.

**ON JOINING AUDIBLY IN
PUBLIC WORSHIP.**

BY THE

REV. EDWARD BENENS, M.A.

RECTOR OF ST. MARTIN'S, VINCEY.



LONDON:

EDWARDS AND HUGHES.

AVE-MARIA LANE.

1846.

[Price 1½d., or 10s. 6d. per 100.]

On Joining Audibly in Public Worship.

ROMANS xv. 6.

“ That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God,
even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” *

IN several places in his Epistles, St. Paul mentions the “ continuing instant in prayer,” as one of the leading features in the character of those, who have been called out of heathen darkness to the pure light of the Gospel.

The being constant and earnest in our addresses to the throne of grace, “ praying always with all prayer and supplication,” we should all of us regard, not only as an important duty, but as a high and valuable privilege,—a privilege, which we should rejoice to exercise, both in private, in our families, and in the public assemblies of the church. Upon the manner in which we ought to take part in the public devotions of the house of God, I now wish to make some observations.

* See an excellent and judicious sermon on this text and subject, published in 1825, by Bishop Mant, the worthy successor of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in the diocese of Down and Connor.

The assembling of ourselves together in the temple of the Lord, was instituted both for instruction in righteousness, for the improvement of the congregation in Christian knowledge, by the reading and preaching of the Word of God, and also, for uniting in social or common prayer and praises to the Author and Giver of all good things. This last object of public worship, is, perhaps, the most important of the two. "My house shall be called the house of prayer;" THE HOUSE OF PRAYER, *emphatically and chiefly*.

In order, however, that either of these objects of coming to church may be answered, it is evident that a devout seriousness and attention are absolutely necessary. If any one comes to church as a mere outward and formal observance, without trying to have his heart and mind engaged in the proper object and business of the place, he, surely, is guilty of a sort of insult to Him, to whose honour and service the church is dedicated.

Upon this part of the subject I have addressed you in a preceding discourse;* and, I trust, my friends, that we shall all ever be on our guard against any such irreverency, such lightness of behaviour; and that when we assemble together we shall endeavour, according to the words of the text, "with one mind and one mouth to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

With one mind. The frame of *mind* is obviously what is of most importance. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Both in our private and in our public devotions, we must endeavour to "pray

* "On Behaviour in Church: Sermon XVI."

both with the spirit, and with the understanding also." In order that our minds may be in a proper state to glorify God in public worship, we should endeavour, before we go to church, to bring them into a composed and serious frame, as little distracted as may be by worldly cares and anxieties, or by worldly follies. When we have entered the church, and taken our accustomed place, we should fervently implore that Being, "unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid," "that He would cleanse our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit;" that He would make us attentive and devout in our prayers; that He would "pour into our hearts the spirit of grace and supplication;" and grant, that "both the words of our lips and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable in his sight."

Throughout the church service, we must keep our *minds* in as attentive and devout a frame as possible. Entirely to check and restrain the wandering of the thoughts, even at the time when we ought and wish to be most serious and collected, is very difficult, perhaps impossible. We must prevent their wandering, however, as much as we can, and humbly implore God to pardon our manifold failings and deficiencies, and to strengthen us by his grace against this waywardness of spirit.

It would, I think, contribute to keep up the attention, and to give additional life and animation to public worship, if all would unite together in glorifying God, not only "with one mind," but also "WITH ONE MOUTH." What I mean is, that all the congregation should join *audibly*, or aloud, in those parts of the church service in

which they are directed so to join by the Prayer Book. All Christians must acknowledge the force of the Apostle's injunction, "Let all things be done decently and in order;" and all consistent members of the Church of England must acknowledge the propriety, the *positive duty*, of complying with the orders and directions of the church, when they are in accordance with the word of God. Pay attention, then, to the directions given in the Prayer Book for joining audibly in public worship.

Near the commencement of divine service, upon the minister's saying, "O Lord, open thou our lips," the congregation is supposed to answer, "and our mouth shall show forth thy praise." Let then the mouth of the congregation show forth the praises of God, not in a mere whisper only,—not like one who speaks only to himself and to God, (1 Cor. xiv. 28,)—but *audibly*, in a tone reverent and subdued it may be,—but still such as may be heard in the house of God.

A considerable number of our congregations are in the habit of joining very properly in the Psalms, when read in church. *I much wish that you would, in a similar manner, unite in making all THE RESPONSES;—the short petitions in the litany, and after each of the commandments, for instance:—and in reciting the general confession, the Lord's prayer, whenever it occurs, and the creeds. Particularly I wish all to join in the AMEN, after the prayers and collects.* These are offered up to God by the minister in the name of the congregation; but the congregation ought devoutly to follow, and join in them, in their hearts and minds; and then to adopt, and make the petitions their own, *by audibly saying Amen* at the conclusion of each

of them. In the temple worship of the Jews,—a worship instituted by their great lawgiver, according to the directions which he had received in the mount from Him, who was the object of that worship,—in the temple worship of the Jews, we repeatedly find the people *audibly* joining, either by short responses, or by saying *Amen*; and you may recollect that the hundred and sixth Psalm concludes with the injunctions, “Let all the people say Amen. Praise ye the Lord.” Accordingly, we find, in the sixteenth chapter of the first book of Chronicles, “And all the people said Amen, and praised the Lord.” At the dedication of Solomon’s temple, as related in the sixth and seventh chapters of the second book of Chronicles, after a description of the other ceremonies which attended that solemn festival, is added an account of the part taken by the people: “All the children of Israel bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.”*

Sadly cold, and languid, and inanimate, do our congregations too often appear, during that part of the service when they are supposed to be engaged in common prayer, in offering their united supplications to the throne of grace. The voice of the minister is heard; but, in too many instances, it is responded to by the voice of the parish clerk alone, the rest of the people preserving the silence and the stillness of sleep. Now, it should ever be borne in mind, that the office of the parish clerk is, not to speak *instead* of the rest of the congre-

* See the sermon by Bishop Mant, before referred to.

gation, as *their representative*, but merely to guide and lead them, in making the responses, and joining in the common service. Whenever the clerk speaks, the people also ought to speak with him; whenever his voice is heard in the church, the voice of all the congregation should be heard also, as *with one mouth* glorifying God.

God forbid that anything that I have said on this subject should be so perverted,—so misunderstood,—as if it were intended to encourage the slightest approach to a display, or parade of devotion. God forbid that any of you should be actuated by the spirit of those hypocrites, who “love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.” (Matt. vi. 5.) God forbid that any of you should join in the public devotions of the church in the spirit of ostentation. I am persuaded that, in many persons, the backwardness to take part *audibly* in divine service, proceeds from a spirit of humility and of retiring diffidence. But it should be remembered, that, while on the one hand, we can hardly guard too anxiously against permitting the desire of the praise of men to be our leading motive for the performance of any duty, so, on the other hand, we are expressly commanded by our Lord himself, so to “let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.” And, surely, this promotion of the glory of God is likely to be the result of our joining *audibly* and devoutly in public worship. We thus show that we are not sunk down in listlessness or in slumber, but are paying attention to the duty in which we profess to be engaged. We thus, in

some degree, range ourselves on the Lord's side. We thus show that we are not ashamed of worshipping Him openly, while we offer our prayers and praises *audibly*, "in the sight and in the hearing of all his people, in the courts of the Lord's house."

I think your own observation and reflection will satisfy you, that this practice would be attended with beneficial consequences on those who witness it. Many, who are now silent, would be encouraged by example to join audibly in the service also. Many, who are inattentive, would become serious. The whole congregation would put on more, both of the appearance, and of the reality, of an assembly of brother Christians, uniting together with heart and voice in worshipping their Creator and their Redeemer. Even those, who have themselves but little religion in their hearts, might be influenced and affected by it; and the effect might in some degree be produced, which is spoken of by St. Paul, as the probable effect of the right exercise of one of those gifts of the Spirit which were vouchsafed to the primitive church. If all unite fervently and audibly in common prayer, "and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and so falling down on his knees, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.)

In the Holy Scriptures we meet with different occasions, on which the servants of God thus united together, in uttering aloud their praises and thanksgivings to their Creator and Preserver. Thus we find Moses and the children of Israel uniting their voices together, in singing praises

and giving glory to God, after their miraculous deliverance from the army of Pharaoh. And thus we are told, in the Acts of the Apostles, that when Peter and John returned to their own company, after being threatened by the chief priests and rulers of the Jews, the assembled church "lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that therein is." (Acts iv. 24.)

The glorified spirits and saints in heaven are represented, in the book of Revelation, as joining together, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," in thanksgiving and praise, and "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. v. 11, 12.) And when the "voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great;" it immediately follows, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. xix. 5, 6.) What a contrast to the comparative stillness, the silent and listless indifference and inattention, which pervade too many of our congregations!

I trust, my friends, that you enter readily into what I have said. I trust that you will all perceive and feel how much additional animation and interest is given to the church service, how much the object of public worship is promoted, when the people regularly and devoutly join in it *audibly*,

in those parts which are pointed out to them in the liturgy. Our spiritual affections and devotion are so sadly apt to become languid and lifeless, that we should be glad to have recourse to every means in our power to animate and quicken them. Let us earnestly beseech the Almighty God to lift up our hearts to him; to pour into our hearts the genuine spirit of grace and supplication; to raise and to spiritualize our thoughts and affections; to make us feel that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth:" and "may the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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